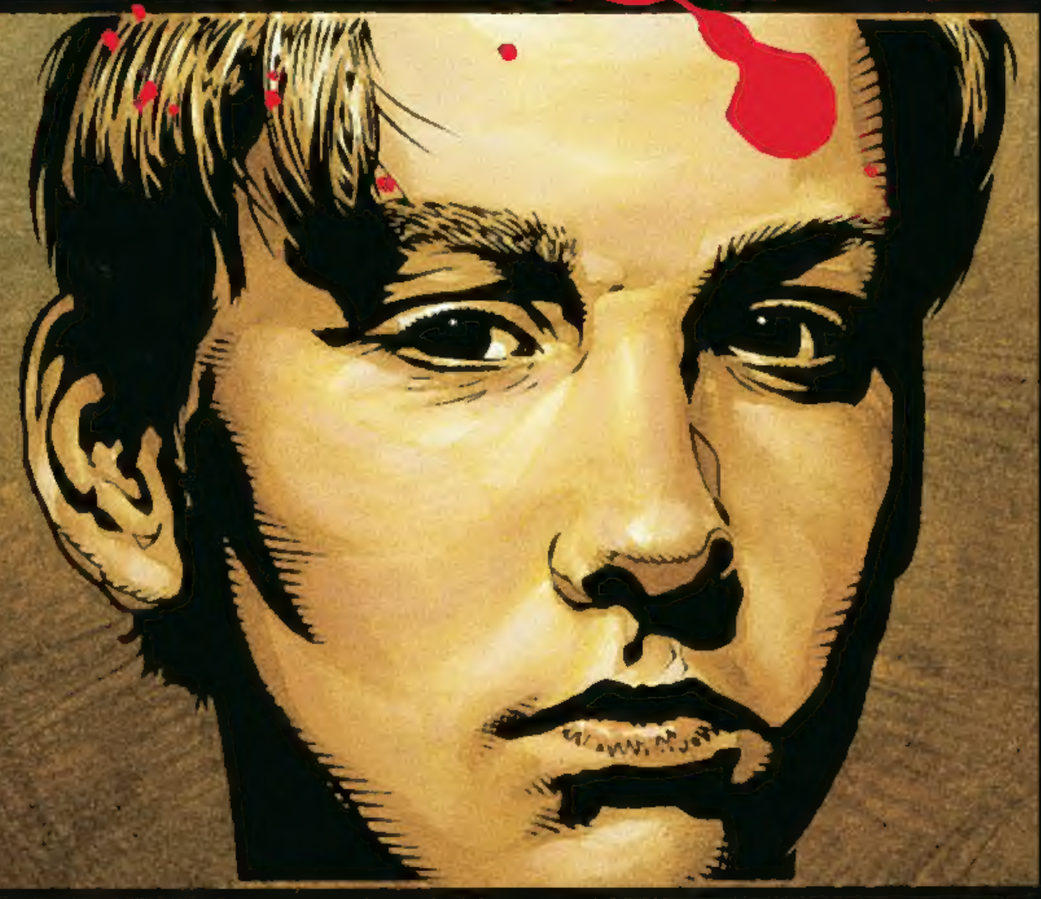
JOHN CONSTANTINE HELLBLAZER

SHOOT

Warren Ellis
Phil Jimenez
Andy Lanning
Darko Macan
Gary Erskine
Jason Aaron
Sean Murphy

VERTIGO



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Warren Ellis Darko Macan Jason Aaron Dave Gibbons
Jamie Delano Brian Azzarello Peter Milligan China Miéville
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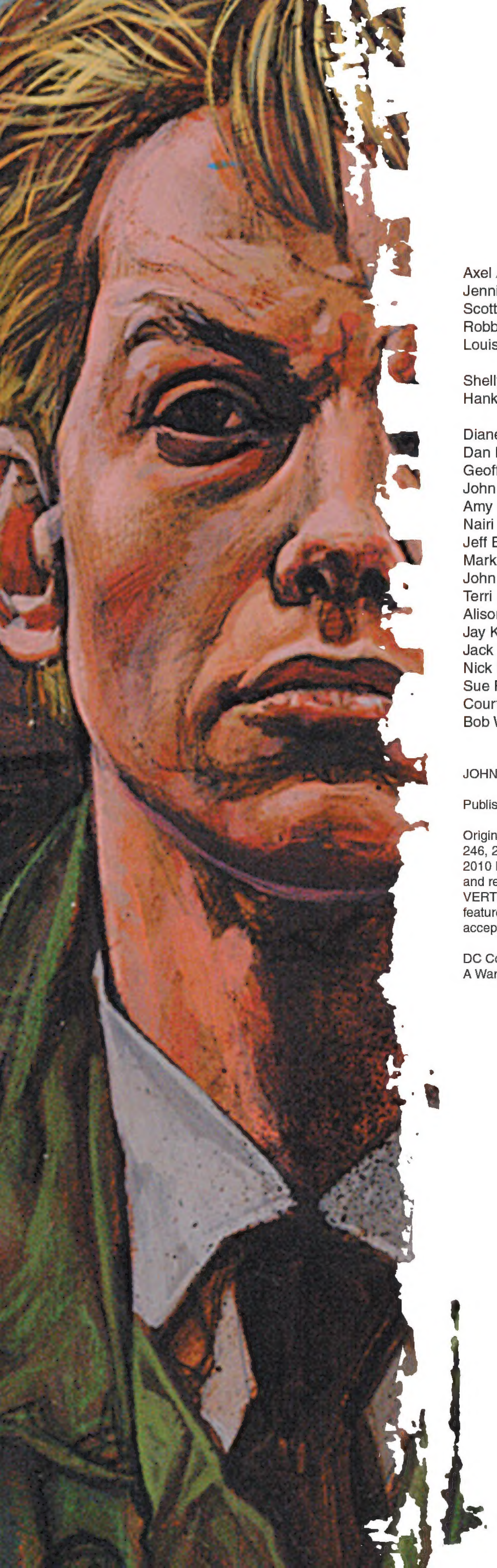

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JOHN CONSTANTINE, HELLBLAZER: SHOOT

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Lettering by Jared K. Fletcher

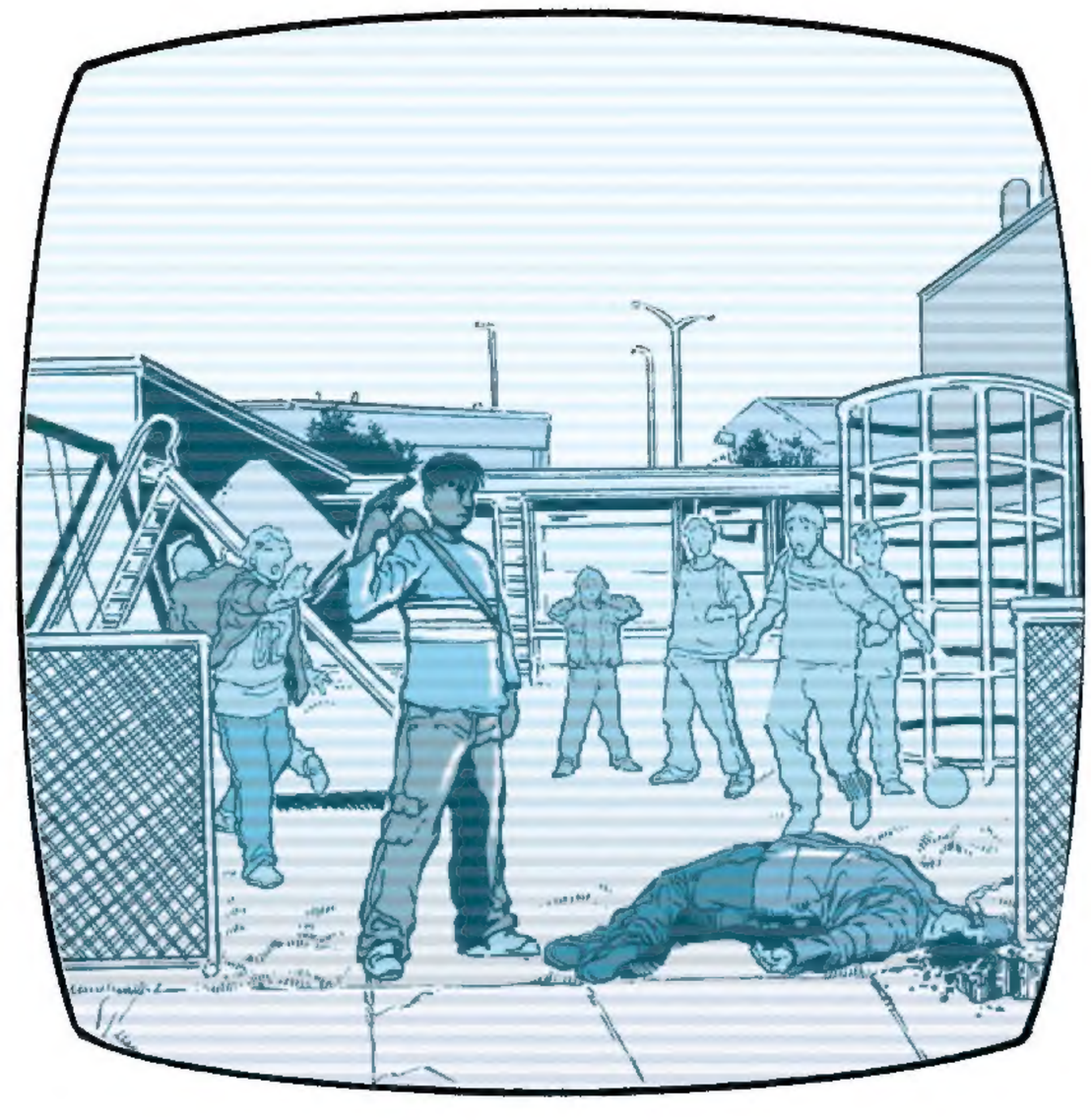
44 MAGNUM

DM
BLUDSTREET
1999

BYE, NOW, DAVID...YOU HAVE A GOOD DAY NOW, HONEY...
MOM...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY...WE'LL BE HERE WAITING FOR YOU THIS AFTERNOON...

DAVID?



DAVID?

SPOKANE INCIDENT NOTES: MUCH THE SAME PROFILE AS OTHER INVESTIGATED INCIDENTS.

NO MOTIVATION. NO PROVOCATION. NO EXPLANATION.

JUST *DEAD* KIDS.

:sigh:

PENNY CARNES.

OH, HI, RICK.

YES, I'M STILL ON THAT GOVERN-MENT GIG...

WELL, WHAT DO YOU WANT THEM TO CALL IT? "THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WHY CHILDREN BLOW THE SHIT OUT OF EACH OTHER IN PLAYGROUNDS"?

APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, RICK, BUT THAT'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT. AND SO WILL YOUR PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

YEAH, YEAH... YADDA YADDA YADDA... GET OFF THE GODDAMN LINE...

'BYE.

CONTINUING NOTES. PAPER ON PREMEDITATED MASS/SPREE KILLINGS, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF KILLERS AND VICTIMS.

I KEEP COMING BACK TO *JONES-TOWN*.

EVERYTHING WENT TO HELL FOR THE REVEREND JIM JONES IN JONESTOWN, GUYANA.

HE EXHORTED HIS FLOCK TO COMMIT SUICIDE, TO SAVE THEMSELVES FROM THE SHIT JONES HAD BROUGHT DOWN ON THEM.

EVERYONE DRANK POISONED KOOL-AID WHILE JONES ADDRESSED THEM. *NINE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN* MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

BABIES.

I'VE GOTTEN PERMISSION TO USE MY DISCOVERIES FOR THE COMMITTEE PROFILING SCHOOLYARD CHILD-CHILD SLAYINGS IN THE PAPER.

BUT I KEEP COMING BACK TO THE JONESTOWN MASSACRE. IT'S SINCE I WAS GIVEN THE TAPE.

AND SOMEONE *TAPED IT.*

I LISTEN TO IT EVERY NIGHT. HAVE DONE FOR *WEEKS.*

REC

PLAY

SIMPLE. IT'S SIMPLE. THERE'S NO CONVULSIONS WITH IT... DON'T BE AFRAID TO DIE.

EVERYBODY KEEP CALM AND TRY TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN CALM...THEY'RE NOT CRYING FROM PAIN, IT'S JUST A LITTLE BITTER-TASTING...

EEEEYAAAHH

AW, PENNY...

C'MON NOW, PENNY... TIME TO WAKE UP, HONEY...
FUH?
WHUH ...HMN.
OKAY.
WHASS TIME.
NINE FIFTEEN. HOW LONG YOU FIGURE YOU SLEPT?
DRINK YOUR COFFEE. GOT IT SQUIRTED OUT OF THE DEVIL'S ASSHOLE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.
I SWEAR THEY GET COWS TO SHIT IN THAT COFFEE AT NIGHT.
UHHGG.
BUT SINCE YOU'RE HERE EVERY FUCKING NIGHT, AND YOU'VE NEVER MENTIONED ANYONE TRYING TO SNEAK LIVESTOCK PAST YOUR DOOR...
BRIAN...
DON'T BRIAN ME. IT'S A SENATE COMMITTEE. IT'S LIKE JURY DUTY. DON'T WORK YOURSELF TO DEATH ON IT. NOT WORTH IT.
I GOT TOO MUCH TO DO HERE TO BLOW IT OFF EVERY NIGHT. GOD, I'VE GOT A WHOLE BUNCH OF KILLINGS ON HOME VIDEO TAPE I GOT TO WATCH.
WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU GOT MORE THAN THREE HOURS' SLEEP?
I DON'T SLEEP REAL WELL THESE DAYS. IT'S NOT A PROBLEM.

ODD.

I KNOW I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE.

JACKSONVILLE? HELEN VOLCANO?

HERE.

CAN'T BE.

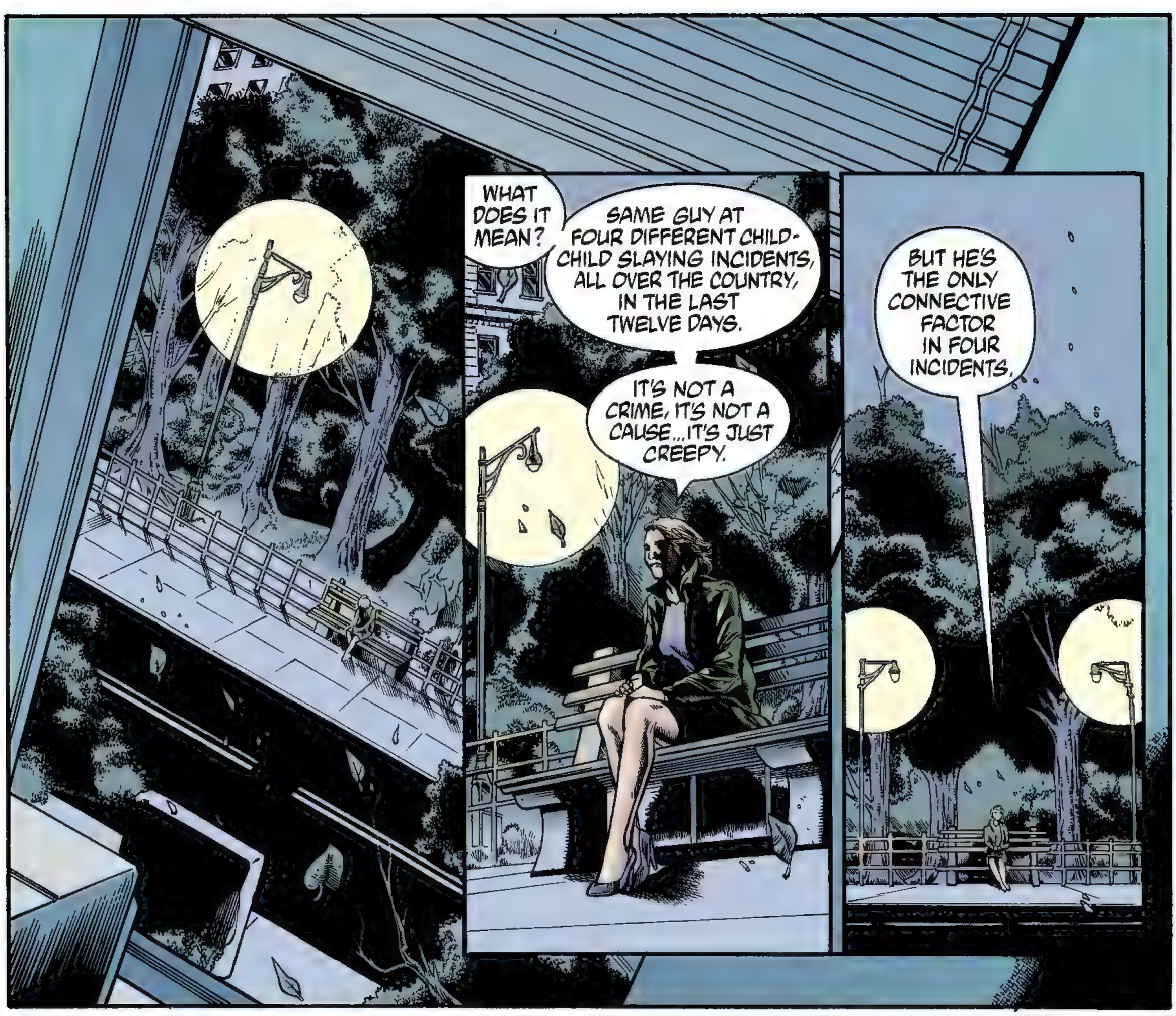
TAPES WERE MADE ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE COUNTRY, BOTH IN THE LAST WEEK. NO WAY IS THE SAME GUY GONNA BE IN BOTH OF THEM.

PROBABLY SAW HIM ON THE STREET SOMEPLACE.

MAYBE I SHOULD LET BRIAN GIVE ME A LIFT HOME TODAY...

OH SHIT.

YOU NEED THAT RIDE HOME, PENNY?
No thanks.


WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
SAME GUY AT FOUR DIFFERENT CHILD-CHILD SLAYING INCIDENTS, ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, IN THE LAST TWELVE DAYS.
IT'S NOT A CRIME, IT'S NOT A CAUSE...IT'S JUST CREEPY.
BUT HE'S THE ONLY CONNECTIVE FACTOR IN FOUR INCIDENTS.

PLEASE, FOR GOD'S SAKE, LET'S GET ON WITH IT...

MOMMY, MOMMY, MOMMY...

WE MUST DIE WITH DIGNITY...WE MUST HURRY... STOP THESE HYSTERICS...

NAAAAAAAAA

DEATH IS A MILLION TIMES MORE PREFERABLE TO SPENDING MORE DAYS IN THIS LIFE...

NAAAAAAAAA

MOMMY

IF YOU KNEW WHAT WAS AHEAD, YOU'D BE GLAD TO BE STEPPING OVER TONIGHT.

CHRIST.

WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS? THAT MARILYN MANSON OR SOMETHING?

UH.

S'RECORDIN' JIM JONES' LAST SPEECH A' JONESTOWN.

SHUT UP.

TURNED SOMETHING WEIRD UP YESTERDAY.

A REPEATER.

WHAT?

THIS MAN KEEPS TURNING UP AT SCHOOLYARD SLAYINGS.

YOU'VE GOT LINES INTO THE *FBI* HERE. POLICE. ALL THAT.

FIND OUT WHO HE IS. FIND OUT WHERE HE IS.

HE SAID FIVE MINUTES, HE'S HAD FIVE MINUTES, CAN'T TRUST ANYONE ANY-MORE, EVEN THE FUCKIN' FBI LIE TO YOU--

--HEY, HEY. HERE WE GO.

HERE IT COMES...

JESUS CHRIST, I HOPE I NEVER NEED THE FBI TO FIND SOMEONE FOR *ME*...

GAVE THEM THE STILLS AND THE PAPERWORK AND THIS IS WHAT WE GET BACK. THE BEST THEY'VE GOT.

BASTARDS.

FBI

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

JOHN CONSTANT

File Restricte

WHAT'S GOING ON?

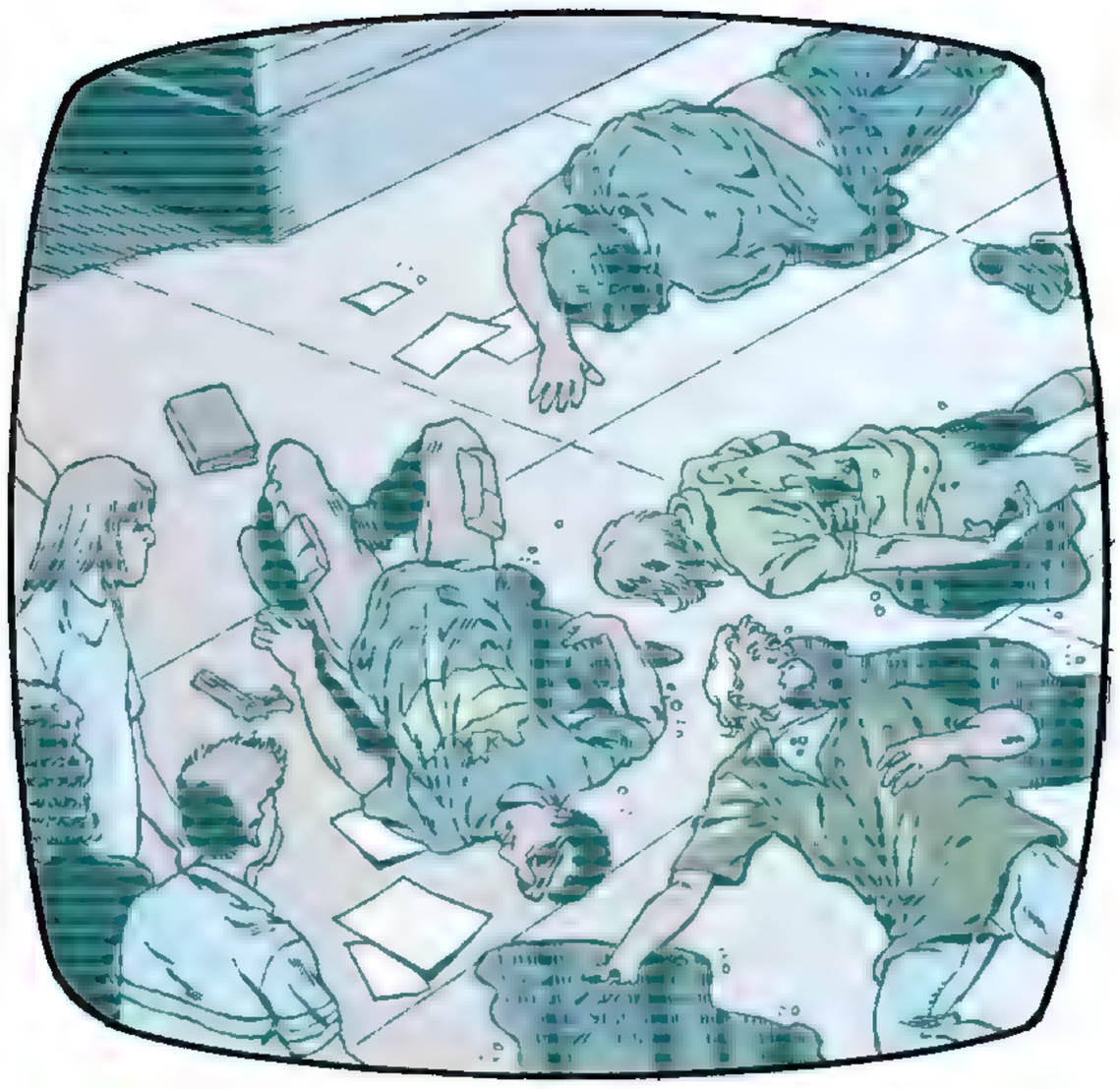
--CARLTON HARRIS, ELEVEN YEARS OLD, ARRIVED AT SCHOOL LATE, DURING THE MORNING BREAK, TOOK OUT A PISTOL AND KILLED FIVE OTHER CHILDREN BEFORE SHOOTING HIMSELF IN THE FACE.

MARK SPEARS LIVE FOR **CNN**, WILL BRING YOU MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TRAGEDY AS I GET IT--

CIN

MARK, CAN WE GET A LOOK AT THE SCENE?

SURE, JOHN. MAX, COME ABOUT...



...IT'S DECIDING WHAT TO BLAME, YOU KNOW?

BLAME THE PARENTS FOR KEEPING A GUN IN THE HOUSE? NOT WITHOUT BLAMING THE CONSTITUTION AND PULLING THE *NRA*'S CHAIN.

THE MOVIES, THE VIDEO GAMES, THE COMIC BOOKS...

MORE KILLERS FIXATE ON AND DRAW INSPIRATION FROM THE BIBLE THAN ANY OTHER PIECE OF CULTURE.

SO IF I DID A NINTENDO THING CALLED "FLYING CHAIN-SAW JESUS" I'D BE RICH?

EW. AND YOU'VE GOT KIDS.

AND THAT'S HOW I KNOW. YOU OUGHTA SEE THE LITTLE BASTARDS PLAYING THEIR VIDEO GAMES. EYES BRIGHT, TEETH BARED, LIKE WOLVES TEARING UP A SHEEP.

IT'S NOT THE GAMES THAT DO IT, BRIAN.

YOU KEEP TELLING ME WHAT IT ISN'T. TELL ME WHAT IT IS.

GOD, IF I KNEW, I'D BOTTLE IT AND SPRAY IT OVER EVERY SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY ...HOLD ON...

DAMN IT. KNEW THE BAG FELT LIGHT. LEFT MY TAPE RECORDER IN THE OFFICE.

PENNY, I HAVE TO LEAVE LIKE NOW TO PICK UP THE BOYS FROM FOOTBALL PRACTICE...

THEN GO. YOU CAN OWE ME A RIDE, I'LL GET THE BUS HOME.

YOU SURE?

NO BIG DEAL. SEE YOU TOMORROW.

EEEEYAAAAAHH

WE'RE COMMITTING AN ACT OF REVOLUTIONARY SUICIDE PROTESTING AGAINST THE CONDITIONS OF AN INHUMAN WORLD...

NOT THE NEW WHITNEY HOUSTON, THEN?

I WAS JUST THINKING, SHE'S FUCKING CHANGED A BIT...

HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?

OH MY GOD.

CAME IN THROUGH THE BLEEDIN' DOOR. HOW'D YOU THINK?

MIND IF I SMOKE?

IT'S LOCKED.

WE NEED TO HAVE A BIT OF A CHINWAG, YOU AND ME.

SIT DOWN.

SO.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MAKES UP THE MINDS FOR THE GREAT AND GOOD OVER THESE CHILD-ON-CHILD KILLINGS IN SCHOOLS.

GOT ALL YOUR EVIDENCE, I SEE. HOW'S IT GOING?

I DON'T MAKE UP ANYBODY'S MIND FOR THEM. I'M JUST PROVIDING...INSIGHT.

LOUISIANA

BOOGIEING AROUND THE OFFICE TO THE SCREAMS OF POISONED KIDS IN JONESTOWN HELPING WITH THE OLD INTUITION THEN, IS IT?

LOVELY.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS... THERE?

OH, I'VE BEEN SPOTTED, 'AVE I?

I'M HERE ON A FAVOR FOR A MATE.

HIS WIFE LEFT HIM, YOU SEE. TOOK THEIR ONLY SON AND THE NEW BLOKE OVER THE WATER TO GLORIOUS AMERICA TO START A NEW LIFE FAR AWAY FROM HIM.

WHICH IS FAIR ENOUGH, REALLY, HE'S A BIT OF A TOSSER.

BUT HIS ONLY SON GOT HIS BRAINS BLOWN CLEAN ACROSS A PLAYGROUND IN LOUISIANA THE OTHER MONTH.

HIM AND HIS KILLER WERE BOTH TEN YEARS OLD.

AND NO ONE WAS TELLING ME MATE WHAT WAS GOING ON, SO HE BEGGED ME TO COME OVER HERE AND HAVE A SHUFTI FOR MESELF, SEE WHAT THE SCORE IS.

SO I'VE BEEN HAVING A BUTCHER'S 'OOK, NOSING AROUND, SEEING WHAT I CAN SEE.

JUST LIKE YOU.

GETTING ANYWHERE?

NO YOU'RE BLOODY NOT!

I'VE READ YOUR NOTES, YOUR BLOODY *THESIS*...YOU DON'T HAVE THE FAINTEST FUCKING IDEA WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT, JUST LIKE THE REST OF THE STUPID FUCKING COUNTRY...

YOU'VE GOT ALL THESE TAPES, AND BITS OF FUCKING PAPER, AND LOOK AT YOU, YOU HAVEN'T SLEPT IN AT LEAST A WEEK OR I'M A FUCKING BANANA...

...AND YOU'RE *NOWHERE*, ARE YOU? YOU'RE ALL LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO BLAME WHEN YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW.

I MEAN, IT'S TYPICAL, INNIT? YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THAT ONE THING TO SUBTRACT OUT OF CHILDREN'S LIVES TO MAKE IT ALL BETTER.

TAKE OUT THE VIDEOGAMES, THE FUNNY MUSIC, THE FOOD COLORING, KIDS WON'T SHOOT EACH OTHER ANYMORE.

YOU'RE NOT LOOKING AT WHAT'S ON THESE TAPES.

'ERE. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

I'M NOT HERE TO HURT YOU, PENNY. I WON'T LAY A FINGER ON YOU. JUST LOOK AT THIS.

I SEE A KID THAT'S GOING TO KILL ANOTHER KID FOR NO GODDAMN REASON.

NO. LOOK.

HE'S DRAWN THE GUN. AND NONE OF THESE CHILDREN ARE RUNNING AWAY.

I SEE KIDS IN A SCHOOLYARD IN SOME DEAD-END HOLE OF A TOWN IN SOME ASSHOLE COUNTY IN SOME CRUMBLING STATE WITH NO EDUCATION AND NO HOPE AND NO FUTURE AND THEY'RE WAITING.

THEY'RE JUST STANDING THERE.

BORN INTO A LIFE THAT'S ALREADY SLID OUT OF VIEW. LOOKING FORWARD TO TURNING OUT JUST LIKE THEIR MOMMIES AND DADDIES.

LIFE ALREADY LIVED FOR THEM.

LIFE IN A WORLD MOMMY AND DADDY COULDN'T BE ARSED TO BUILD PROPERLY, A WORLD THAT MAKES NO FUCKING SENSE.

A WORLD WHERE KIDS ACTUALLY GO TO SPECIAL CLASSES TO LEARN TO RECOGNIZE REAL EMOTIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE BECAUSE THEY WERE RAISED BY THE TELEVISION.

THEY'RE ONLY KIDS, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. THIS IS THE BEST RESPONSE THEY CAN MANAGE TO THE INSANE FUCKING WORLD THEY'RE IN.

THEY STAND THERE AND WAIT FOR THE BULLET.

LOOK AT THAT PIECE OF TAPE AGAIN. REALLY STUDY IT.

LOOK AT THE KID'S MOUTH.

HE'S NOT RUNNING, NOT SCREAMING. HE'S ABOUT TO HAVE HIS FACE SHOT OFF, AND HE'S SAYING SOMETHING, QUIETLY...

LOOK WHAT HE'S SAYING.

LOOK.

HELLBLAZER

written by
WARREN ELLIS

drawn by
PHIL JIMENEZ & ANDY LANNING

colored by **JAMES SINCLAIR**

separated by **DIGITAL CHAMELEON**

lettered by **CLEM ROBINS**

edited by **AXEL ALONSO**

shoot.

GLENN FABRY '99

I'VE MISSED SO MANY FUNERALS IN MY LIFE (A GOOD TRAINING FOR MISSING MY OWN)--

SO, OF COURSE, ONCE I SHOWED UP, NOBODY ELSE CAME.

JOHN CONSTANTINE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

FEELING LIKE A RIGHT GIT FOR TAKING A DOG OUT FOR A WALK AND FORGETTING I DON'T HAVE ONE.

YOU'RE CURIOUS, AREN'T YA? YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT MY GRAND-FATHER?

RIGHT YOU ARE, MATE! I MAKE A HABIT OF GETTING UP IN THE MORNING TO INQUIRE ABOUT DEAD OLD BLOKES WHOSE NAMES I DON'T EVEN KNOW.

IT'S KEMAL.

EH?

"HIS NAME WAS KEMAL."

<WHAT MONTH IS THIS, AZRA?>

<THERE'S A CALENDAR IN THE KITCHEN, WHY DON'T YOU LOOK AT IT?>

<I NEVER HAD TO DO THAT IN THE OLD COUNTRY.>

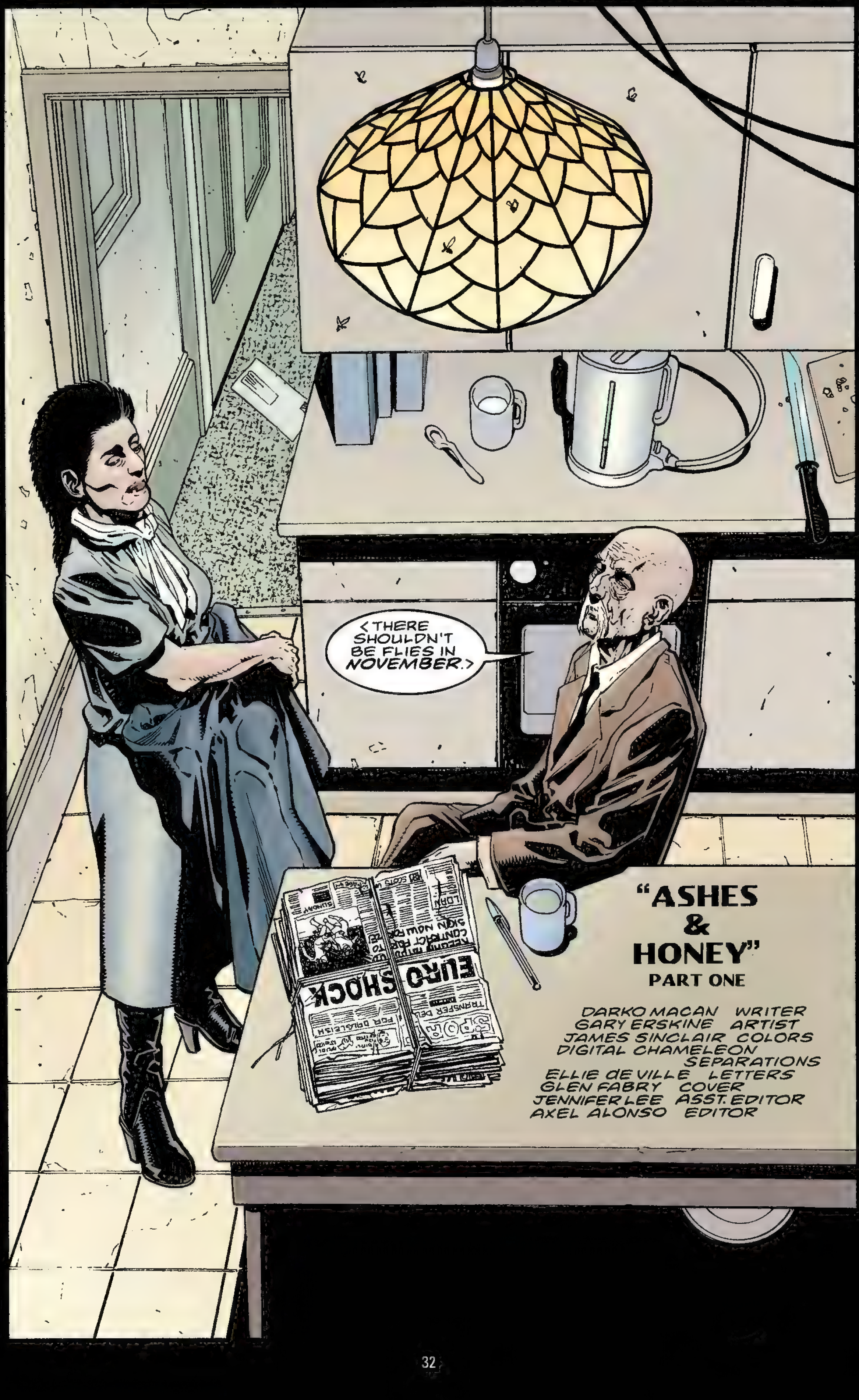
<I WOULD LOOK AT THE TREES, LISTEN TO MY BEES, SMELL THE GRASS AND TASTE THE AIR--> NOVEMBER

<--AND I WOULD KNOW THE DAY AND THE HOUR.>

<DAD, YOU'RE NOT IN THE OLD COUNTRY ANYMORE!>

<NO, I'M NOT.>

<IT'S NOVEMBER. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT ALL OF A SUDDEN?>


<THERE SHOULDN'T BE FLIES IN NOVEMBER.>
EURO SHOCK
"ASHES & HONEY"
PART ONE
DARKO MACAN WRITER
GARY ERSKINE ARTIST
JAMES SINCLAIR COLORS
DIGITAL CHAMELEON SEPARATIONS
ELLIE DE VILLE LETTERS
GLEN FABRY COVER
JENNIFER LEE ASST. EDITOR
AXEL ALONSO EDITOR

<THIS IS LONDON, FATHER. MAYBE THE FLIES ARE DIFFERENT HERE, MAYBE THEY EAT MORE OF, WHAT DO THEY CALL THEM, PRESERVATIVES?>

<WHERE ARE MY BOOTS, AZRA?>

<YOUR BOOTS?>

<I CAN'T FIND THEM ANYWHERE.>

<WHO CARES? I'LL FIND YOU A NEW PAIR! YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE THINGS THESE PEOPLE THROW AWAY...>

<I HAD THEM FOR THIRTY YEARS. DO YOU THINK SAMIR TOOK THEM?>

<NOW, WHY WOULD SAMIR NEED THEM?>

<I BROUGHT HIM AN ALMOST NEW PAIR OF TRAINERS AND-->

<HUSO, OPEN UP!>

<IT'S ME, SAMIR!>

<WHAT'S THE PASSWORD?>

"PIZDA."

<HOW ARE YOU TODAY, SAMIR?>

<BETTER, THANKS!>

THIS IS IT THEN, EH, SQUIRE?

NOT MUCH COMPANY, ARE YOU? I'VE KNOWN *NUNS* WHO WERE MORE FUN--

OH, *SOD IT!*

UNNECESSARY, UPON A REFLECTION. THE REFLEXES MIGHT'VE STILL BEEN WORKING--

--BUT DEAD DOGS DON'T PISS.

THEY JUST GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS.

Denis Van Asten

CHARLEY? CHRISTINA F

555 0817

ELVIS COSTELLO

JEBO!

hepburn

OASIS

BOB SNEEK BAND

KARMA POLICE

LES

20/20

WHERE'S HARVEY

RITA

MITSUKO

PAUL R.

BLAND

GREKKO 98

BORDERS

SLIPPER EIMPETS

BIERIT ORGASM

cornelius

SCOTT

Tickell

Kelly Viddeo

PINK

231068

KROSS

MANK!

<GOD BE WITH YOU, KEMAL. DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE OF THAT STUFF?>

<YES, YES...>

<HERE.>

WILL IT GET ME HIGH?

BETTER YET--

--IT'S GOING TO TAKE YOU HOME!

<AND NOW, LITTLE DEAD FLY-->

<TAKE ME TO SAMIR!>

"PIZDA."

HULLO, SAMIR, THIS IS PAUL.

'LO, BRAD. 'LO, PAUL. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

IT'S MY *EYE*. BRAD TOLD ME YOU COULD MAKE IT GOOD AGAIN!

IT CAN BE DONE. WHAT DID YOU *BRING* ME?

I ONLY HAVE *THIS* AT THE MOMENT, BUT IT'S A GOOD ONE! AND I'M STRONG SO IF YOU EVER NEED--

I'LL TAKE THE VCR. AND YOU'LL BRING ME ANOTHER.

STAND STILL NOW.

PRECI MOJI, POMAGAJTE!

OKO ISKAM, OKO DAJTE!

IT WAS TRUE! I CAN SEE! I CAN SEE!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SAMIR?

FINE, BRAD, FINE...

ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A SMALL BOY WHO HAD A DOG, HIS ONLY FRIEND IN THE WHOLE WORLD.

THE DOG GOT HIT BY A CAR; THE BOY STARTED NICKING THINGS TO PAY FOR THE DOG'S RESURRECTION. SO FAR, SO GOOD.

THE COPPERS GOT INVOLVED. THEY DON'T BUY THE RESURRECTION PART, BUT THEY DO CALL THE BOY'S PARENTS.

(THE PARENTS, BY THE WAY, HAD LIVED WITH THE UNDEAD DOG FOR A FORTNIGHT AND NOT ONCE NOTICED THE TIREMARKS.)

SAME PARENTS GET SUDDENLY UPSET AND DO THEIR BEST TO FIND THE PLANETARY AUTHORITY ON WEIRD SHIT.

"PIZDA."

MEANING, OF COURSE, ME.

HERE HE IS, SAMIR -- THE RICH KID I TOLD YOU ABOUT.

GOOD.

WHAT DO YOU *WANT* FROM ME, RICH BOY, AND WHAT'VE YOU BROUGHT IN *RETURN*?

I...I'VE BROUGHT YOU *THIS!*

A CREDIT CARD?! WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH A CREDIT CARD?

B-BUT IT'S *PLATINUM!* IT-IT'S BETTER THAN MONEY, MY FATHER ALWAYS SAYS...

IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR FATHER, BUT IT'LL ONLY GET ME *ARRESTED!* A KID WITH A PLATINUM CARD! I NEED *MONEY!* OR STUFF I COULD *FENCE!*

PLEASE! I GAVE ALL MY MONEY AND SOME JEWELS TO THE SITTER SO SHE'D COVER FOR ME! PLEASE--

--IT'S MY SISTER!

WHAT DID YOU DO?

WE WERE JUST PLAYING! THE STUFF WE SAW ON TV!

I DIDN'T WANT HER TO DIE FOR REAL! HONEST, I DIDN'T!

SHUT UP, I'LL DO IT!

PRECI MOJI, SVOJTO DRAGA, DIJETE OVO JE KOD VRAGA!

DJEDI MOJI, POMAGAJTE, NJU VAM ISKAM--

--NJU MI DAJTE!

HIS RAT, DEAD.

SHHH!

YOU GETTING ONE OF THOSE MOODS, SQUIRE? WANT ME TO DIG OUT *LASSIE* FOR YOU?

SQUIRE?

<NO, SAMIR! DON'T!>

ONA MI JE SRCE TAKLA, VRATITE JE VI IZ PAKLA!

SHIT!

SAMIR!

OPEN UP, KID! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *MESSING* WITH!

"PISS-TA"?

PIZDA SI SAM, PEDERU ENGLESKI!

NOBODY GETS IN WITHOUT THE *PASS-WORD!*

THE *PASSWORD!* WHAT WAS IT? SOMETHING WITH *PISS?*

SO MUCH FOR JOHN THE POLYGLOT --

BACK TO THE BASICS.

OH, I'VE GOT IT: "GREEN MAMBA"!

"GREEN MAMBA"? THAT'S NO PASS-WORD!

PERHAPS NOT--

--BUT I CALL THEM AS I SEE THEM!

AAAAAAGH!

GET IT OFF! GETITOFF!

CHEERS, MATE!

PUNO BOLJI... SAM... OD SMRTI... NITKO... MENE... NITKO... STRTI...

THE KINDER-GARTEN'S CLOSING, BOYS AND GIRLS! UNCLE JOHN'S HERE AND--

>OUMPH!<

<SAMIR, DON'T!>

<GRAND-FATHER?>

SHE'S ALIVE! LIZZIE!

<I DID IT! LOOK, GRANDFATHER, I CAN DO IT!>

<NO, SAMIR, YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND! IT'S WRONG!>

<YOU CAN'T JUST WAKE THE DEAD. THERE'S A PRICE! THERE'S ALWAYS A PRICE!>

<TAKE OFF THE BOOTS, SAMIR!>

<I CAN DO IT, I CAN BRING HER BACK! AND NOW-->

<--AND NOW I'LL BRING FATHER BACK, TOO!>

<LISTEN TO ME, SAMIR, WILL YOU?>

<WHY SHOULD I? YOU DID NOTHING TO HELP HIM!>

WHAT ABOUT MY SISTER? WHY DID YOU STOP?

CAN'T STAND FOREIGN MOVIES, PERSONALLY, BUT I WOULDN'T SAY NO TO SOME SUB-TITLES RIGHT NOW.

<THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO. YOUR FATHER'S DEAD, SAMIR.>

<I'LL BRING HIM BACK TO LIFE, YOU'LL SEE! I'VE BEEN PRACTICING! AND I'M EARNING MONEY FOR THE FARE HOME!>

<DO YOU CALL THIS LIFE?>

<I... I HAVE TO BRING HIM BACK... I OWE HIM... HE... HE...>

<I KNOW WHAT HE DID. THE *RIGHT* THING. PARENTS GIVE LIVES FOR THEIR CHILDREN, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.>

<YOUR FATHER'S *DEAD*, SAMIR.>

<I *PROMISED* TO BRING HER BACK.>

<I KNOW.>

<I NEVER ASKED FOR MUCH, SO HELP ME NOW.>

<YOU KNOW WHAT I *ASK FOR*, YOU KNOW WHAT I *OFFER*.>

<GRAND-FATHER, NOUMPFH!>

<PLEASE!>

<GRANDFATHER!>

<GRAND-FATHER!>

VCR
NICAM HHS 2000

RICHIE!

TO BE CONCLUDED

NOT WORKING

GLENN FABRY '99

"HIS NAME WAS KEMAL"?

THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY, MATE?

WHA'?

THOUGHT I'D WAKE YOU UP. GOT A TAD BORED CHATTING WITH MESELF.

WASN'T SLEEPING. *THINKING.*

BAD HABIT, SON. DROP IT AND JOIN THE HUMAN RACE.

YOU *TALK* TOO MUCH, JOHN CONSTANTINE! HALF THE TIME I HAVE *NO IDEA* WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

JEB'O!

THERE'S *HUSO.*

YOU *REMEMBER* HUSO?

CAN'T HONESTLY SAY I *DO.* ONE OF YOUR BOYS FROM THE CRYPT?

YOU TURNED HIS COCK INTO A *SNAKE!*

OH, YEAH, *HIM*. NOT A *REAL* SNAKE, THOUGH.

REAL *ENOUGH* FOR *HIM*. KEPT HUNTING HIM IN DREAMS, HE ALMOST CUT OFF HIS PECKER WITH A *RAZOR*. I GAVE HIM SOME OF MY GRANDFATHER'S HONEY TO--

HOW CAN YOU *FORGET* SUCH A THING?

HULLO, HUSO! <IS THAT *IT*?>

'LO, SAMIR! <YEAH, THE *BEST* I COULD FIND.>

STAR TREK'S A LOT OF BOLLOCKS, RIGHT? BUT I COULD USE ONE OF THEIR PROPS NOW.

<IT'LL DO. WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR *FACE*?>

NO, NOT MARINA SIRTIS. THAT TRANSLATOR THAT MAKES THE GALAXY SPEAK ENGLISH.

<PAUL CAME BACK.>

<HIS EYE DIED AGAIN?>

<YEAH. HE TOOK HIS VCR AND SOME OTHER STUFF. "*INTEREST RATE*," HE SAID.>

<NEVER MIND THE STUFF. I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR FACE.>

<WON'T BE THE LAST TIME. WANT ME TO STAY FOR THE FUNERAL?>

<A *FAMILY AFFAIR*, BUT THANKS!>

SPARE A SUMMARY FOR THE LINGUISTICALLY IMPAIRED, MATE?

ALL THE MAGIC I DID, GOT *UNDONE*. SOME ARE DOWNRIGHT PISSED ABOUT IT.

SEVENTEEN KIDS I *THOUGHT* I HELPED.

I REMEMBER *EACH* ONE.

AND THE MUTT HERE?

HE'S FOR *YOU*, JOHN CONSTANTINE. YOU WERE COMPLAINING ABOUT WALKING WITHOUT ONE!

I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, SON, BUT--

JUST KIDDING, JOHN CONSTANTINE! GIVE IT TO THE KID WHOSE DOG I TRIED TO RESURRECT!

MY GRAND-FATHER'S NAME WAS KEMAL. FOR SIXTY YEARS HE WAS A *BEE-KEEPER*--

ASHES & HONEY

PART TWO

DARKO MACAN WRITER
GARY ERSKINE ARTIST
JAMES SINCLAIR COLORIST
DIGITAL CHAMELEON SEPARATIONS
ELLIE DE VILLE LETTERS
JENNIFER LEE ASST EDITOR
AXEL ALONSO EDITOR

"--AND ONCE HE ALMOST KILLED A MAN."

<FATIMA! WELCOME!>

<I CAME FOR THAT HONEY YOU PROMISED MY MOTHER, KEMAL.>

<IT'S FOR YOU FATIMA--IT IS SWEET LIKE YOU!>

<KEMAL, DON'T! WHAT IF SOMEONE HEARS YOU?>

<LET THEM ALL HEAR! I LOVE YOU, FATIMA, MARRY ME!>

<NO, KEMAL. I LOVE MILAN, AND I'LL MARRY HIM.>

<YOU WILL REGRET THIS, AND SOON!>

<KEMAL?>

<SOON MILAN WILL BE NEITHER HANDSOME NOR ALIVE!>

<YOUR BEES? WHERE ARE ALL YOUR BEES, KEMAL?>

FATIMA!

FATIMA!<IT'S ME--MILAN!>

<AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME--?>

FATIMA?

AAAA HHH!

AAH!

AAH!

AAGH!

OOH!

AH!

AHH!

<WHAT'S GOING ON, KEMAL? KEMAL?!>

<MY BEES ARE *DYING!* HOW COULD I FORGET THEY'D DIE AFTER THEY STING?!>

<NO, NOT EVEN FOR *YOU* CAN I LET THEM DIE! THEY'RE INNOCENT! THEY'RE MY *RESPONSIBILITY!*>

<BACK! *BACK!*>

<I'VE ALMOST TURNED YOU INTO MURDERERS! I'M SORRY! CAN YOU FORGIVE ME?>

KEMAL?

<TAKE THIS. IT WILL HEAL MILAN'S STINGS. TAKE IT, I GUARANTEE IT WORKS.>

<STINGS?>

<GO NOW! GO AND BE HAPPY WITH HIM! GO!>

NICE BEDTIME STORY, MATE. WISH I'D HEARD MORE OF 'EM, MIGHT'VE ENDED UP A BETTER MAN.

DON'T BE A PRICK, JOHN CONSTANTINE! EVERY WORD'S THE *TRUTH*--

--*THEY* DON'T LIE!

YOU TALK TO YOUR *BOOTS*, EH? A GOOD TRICK, SHOULD GO OVER BIG ON THE TELLY!

NOT THE BOOTS. *THEM!*

IT'S SOIL FROM THE OLD COUNTRY. ALL OUR *DEAD* ARE IN HERE!

IF YOU KNOW HOW TO TALK TO THEM, THEY'LL TELL YOU *ANYTHING*, TEACH YOU, GRANT YOU *WISHES*...

IT'S THE *ONE THING* GRANDFATHER TOOK WHEN WE WERE ON THE RUN. HE FILLED UP HIS BOOTS SO HE'D NEVER LOSE CONTACT WITH WHAT HE *WAS*.

CARELESS OF YOU TO SPILL IT, THEN?

NO. SOON IT WON'T *MATTER*.

THIS IS MY MOTHER, AZRA, AND MY SISTER, ZANA. THIS IS JOHN CONSTANTINE, A FRIEND OF GRANDFATHER'S.

'MORNING MA'M, HULLO, LUV.

GOOD MORNING, DZHON KONSTANTIN.

HELLO.

<BAREFOOT IN NOVEMBER, SAMIR? DON'T COME CRYING TO ME WHEN YOU CATCH YOUR DEATH!>

JEB'O.

<NOW, THAT'S A FINE THING TO SAY AT YOUR GRANDFATHER'S *FUNERAL!*>

JEB'O, REK'O SAM TI.

WHAT'S WITH HER *FINGER?*

WHY DON'T YOU ASK *THEM?*

<I DON'T KNOW *HOW* TO THANK YOU FOR THE POTATO, DINKA!>

<DON'T MENTION IT! YOU HAVE *CHILDREN*, YOU NEED IT MORE!>

VRRRRRMM

<WHY DID YOU STOP?>

<THOUGHT I SAW SOME-ONE!>

<IT'S PAST CURFEW.>

<RIGHT. AND WHO SNEAKS AROUND PAST CURFEW?>

<US? HEY, LOOKEE-->

--KROMPIR!

<NO WONDER PEOPLE STARVE!>

<THROW IT OVER HERE, KID!>

<BAJEVIĆ SHOOTS AND SCORES!>

THUNK

<C'MON! WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING!?>

HONK!

JEB'O TE JA DOSADNOG!

<IS THAT SO? WALK THEN!>

VROOOOM

<DON'T BE AN ASS, MUJO! WAIT!>

<NEVER LEAVE A POTATO TO THE ENEMY!>

BRAKKABRAKKAB

RAKKABRAKKAB

SNAP!

<OH, MAMA, WE WERE SO WORRIED!>

<DID YOU GET THE POTATO, MAMA?>

<HUSH, SAMIR! IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAT MAMA CAME BACK OKAY!>

<BUT I'M HUNGRY!>

<MAMA COULDN'T GET THE POTATO BUT SHE'S BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING BETTER.>

<BETTER? WHAT IS IT?>

<WAIT HERE WITH ZANA!>

<WHAT DO YOU THINK MAMA'S BROUGHT? BEANS? MEAT?>

<HUSH, SAMIR!>

<SHOULD WE SAY OUR GOODBYES?>

<NOW YOU WOULD SPEAK? AND WHEN YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID "NO," THEN YOU JUST DIDN'T FEEL LIKE IT!>

MAMA--

<DON'T YOU "MAMA" ME! I DIDN'T BRING UP A DAUGHTER OF MINE TO BE A WHORE!>

<NOT IN FRONT OF PEOPLE, MAMA!>

<AND YOU CAN SWING THIS IN FRONT OF EVERY-BODY? YOU TART!>

<MAMA, PLEASE-->

<"PLEASE"! * HUMPF*!>

<GOD BE WITH YOU, KEMAL.>
<REST IN PEACE, GRANDFATHER.>
GOOD LUCK, OLD MAN.

I HAVE TO GO BACK NOW. I MUST RETURN THE URN.

THANK YOU FOR COMING, MISTER KONSTANTIN!

MA'M.

DO YOU *UNDERSTAND* NOW, JOHN CONSTANTINE, WHY I WON'T BE NEEDING THE THE BOOTS?

MY GRANDFATHER'S ASHES ARE MIXED WITH THE SOIL NOW. THAT MAKES THIS *MY* LAND.

HE'LL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR ME. *THEY* ALL WILL.

GOOD FOR YOU, MATE.

DO *YOU* HAVE A PLACE LIKE THIS, JOHN CONSTANTINE? A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN BE *AT* PEACE?

ME?

I DON'T NEED IT, SQUIRE! I'M ONE OF GOD'S LITTLE CREATURES, WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT AND ALL THAT.

YOU DON'T *HAVE* A HAT, JOHN CONSTANTINE.

GOT ME THERE, MATE.

I HAVE A *GIFT* FOR YOU, JOHN CONSTANTINE. IT'LL HELP YOU FIND THE PLACE WHERE YOU WERE *HAPPIEST.*

IT'S A *HONEYCOMB* FROM THE BEEHIVE THAT GRANDFATHER BUILT ATOP OUR BLOCK.

THERE ARE *BEES* IN LONDON?

WHERE THERE'S *LIFE,* THERE ARE *BEES.*

YOU A BEEKEEPER THEN?

IT WAS WRONG TO RAISE THE DEAD, THEY SHOULD HAVE THEIR *PEACE.* IT'S LIFE THAT NEEDS ALL THE HELP IT CAN GET.

GOODBYE, JOHN CONSTANTINE.

CHEERS, MATE.

YOU IN TROUBLE, LUV?

YOU COULD SAY THAT.

A LOCAL BOY?

MHM. JIMMY BROOKS.

CURLY LIGHT HAIR, SIX FEET, BABY FACE?

YOU KNOW HIM?

NOPE. EVERY JIMMY I'VE EVER MET LOOKED THE SAME.

MESSED YOU UP BAD, EH?

JEB'O.

YEH-BOH. I'VE HEARD SAMIR SAY IT. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

IT MEANS "FUCK IT," BUT ALSO OTHER THINGS.

WE SAY IT WHEN WE ARE HAPPY, SURPRISED OR DOWN, WHEN WE FIGHT THE WORLD AND WHEN WE LOSE. OR WHEN WE WIN. IT HELPS IF WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, TOO.

A PRETTY COMPACT PHILOSOPHY, EH?

YOU COULD SAY THAT.

THANKS FOR THE CHAT, JOHN.

RIGHT YOU ARE, LUV.

WE ARE SO USED TO OUR CREATURE COMFORTS, OUR RUNNING WATER, OUR SILK CUTS--

BUT WHAT IF, SUDDENLY, WE GET TRANSPLANTED ELSEWHERE. STRANGERS IN A STRANGE WORLD.

ONLY THE **STRONG** SURVIVE, ONLY THOSE READY TO CONQUER THE NEW WORLD. GRAVE BY GRAVE--

NO, RICHIE, PLEASE!

STOP SNIVELING, LIZZIE! IT CAN'T *HURT* YOU!

THIS *ASH* WILL TURN EVERY NASTY THOUGHT IN YOUR HEAD INTO A HAIRY VENOMOUS SPIDER! KEEP HURTING YOUR SISTER AND THEY'LL EAT YOU ALIVE!

RICHIE? ARE YOU OKAY?

--BABY BY BABY--

'LO, MATE. YOU JIMMY BROOKS?

EH?

I'M JOHN CONSTANTINE.

JOHN CONSTANTINE? I'VE *HEARD* OF YOU!

I'VE HEARD ABOUT *YOU*, TOO. KNOCKED UP A CUTE REFUGEE GIRL, EH?

WHAT'S IT TO *YOU*?

NOTHING. I'M A BIT LIKE THAT MESELF. LOVE 'EM AND LEAVE 'EM. SEEKING GREENER PASTURES, RIGHT?

YEAH. 'SRIGHT.

YOU DON'T LOOK TOO HAPPY, THOUGH. CAN I *HELP* YOU?

WHY--*HOW* COULD YOU HELP ME?

I'M A MAGICIAN, RIGHT? HERE! A *GIFT*.

A GIFT? THIS?

EAT IT. NO JOKE, I PROMISE.

IT SHOULD'VE SHOWN YOU WHEN YOU WERE HAPPIEST. HAS IT?

LISTEN, MAN. GOTTA GO, GOTTA... UM... PHONE A GIRL. TA!

IF YOU GOTTA, YOU GOTTA.

-- WORD BY WORD.

JEB'O!

THE END

MUCUS MEMBRANE

with

ANTISOCIAL BEES

AND

THE X-RAYED BRAINS

OI! CHECK IT OUT!

OH GOD, THAT'S *DISGUSTING.*

COREY, WHY THE HELL ARE YOU WASTING OUR BATTERY FILMING THIS *SHIT?*

IT'S A *PUNK ROCK* SHOW, INNIT, LUV?

NEVER KNOW WHEN YA MIGHT NEED SOME SHOTS OF A DEAD DOG COVERED IN MAGGOTS.

GOT THE BOLT CUTTERS.

GREAT, LET'S GET THIS GATE OPEN AND GET THE VAN INSIDE BEFORE SOMEBODY SEES US.

DANA, *LOOK* AT THIS, THIS PLACE IS *CONDEMNED.* IS THIS EVEN *SAFE?*

DON'T START, TRAVIS.

BLOODY HELL, LOOKIT 'EM ALL *WIGGLIN'* AROUND LIKE.

DUDE, THAT IS SERIOUSLY THE *WORST* BRITISH ACCENT I'VE EVER HEARD.

BOLLOCKS! SHUT YER GOB, YA WANKER!

DUDE, C'MON. YOU'RE FROM FUCKIN' *OHIO.*

CLINK

LOTTA FUCKIN' LOCKS ON THIS GATE.

COULDN'T WE STAY IN AN ACTUAL *HOTEL* FOR ONCE, IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?

SORRY, TRAVIS. WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF BASIC CABLE PROGRAMMING.

COREY! STOP FILMING THAT FUCKING DOG!

RANDY, START BREAKING OUT THE GEAR. I WANNA GET A FEW SHOTS OF THE CLUB WHILE WE STILL HAVE SOME LIGHT.

THERE'S A *CLUB* IN THERE?

AAAHH, FUCK!

IVAN, WHASSAMTTER?

CUT THE SHIT OUTTA MY FUCKIN' HAND. DAMNIT!

HE BETTER GET A TETANUS SHOT OR HE'S LIABLE TO LOSE THAT HAND.

TRAVIS, GO GET THE VAN.

FINE, BUT I DON'T LIKE THIS. SOMEBODY'S GONNA CALL THE *COPS* ON US.

FOR FUCKSAKE, WE'RE IN THE *ASS-END* OF ENGLAND AT A CONDEMNED JUNKYARD LOOKING FOR A CLUB WHERE A BAND THAT *NOBODY'S* EVER HEARD OF ONCE PLAYED *THIRTY FUCKING YEARS AGO!*

TRUST ME, TRAVIS...

NOBODY REMEMBERS THIS PLACE EVER FUCKING EXISTED!

THIS PR
COND
BY T
ACCESS P
CASANOVA

THIS PROPERTY
CONDEMNED
BY THE CITY OF
NEWCASTLE
ACCESS PROHIBITED
CASANOVA CAR BREAKERS

THE SUMMER OF 1977...

QUEEN ELIZABETH CELEBRATES HER SILVER JUBILEE, STAR WARS OPENS IN THEATERS, ELVIS PRESLEY HAS A HEART ATTACK ON HIS TOILET...

AND SCORES OF BRITISH YOUNGSTERS ARE INSPIRED TO START THEIR OWN BANDS AFTER ATTENDING THE SEX PISTOLS' "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN" TOUR.

AMONG THEM ARE A COUPLE OF CHILDHOOD FRIENDS FROM LIVERPOOL...

GARY LESTER AND JOHN CONSTANTINE.

THEIR BAND, FEATURING CONSTANTINE ON VOCALS AND LESTER ON GUITAR ALONGSIDE A REVOLVING CAST OF BASS PLAYERS AND A DRUMMER KNOWN SIMPLY AS "BEANO," MAKES ITS DEBUT IN THE FALL OF 1977 AT THE TINY **CASANOVA CLUB** IN NEWCASTLE.

LESS THAN A YEAR LATER, CONSTANTINE AND LESTER WOULD RETURN TO THE CASANOVA CLUB, NOT TO PERFORM...

BUT INSTEAD TO WATCH THEIR FLEDGLING BAND BE CONSUMED FOREVER IN A BLAZE OF MYSTERY, MADNESS AND MURDER.

TONIGHT, ON ANOTHER PUNK ROCK EPISODE OF "THE BEST BANDS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF," WE TRAVEL TO NEWCASTLE TO EXPLORE THE MYSTERY OF THE CASANOVA CLUB MURDERS AND TO ANSWER THE QUESTION ONCE AND FOR ALL...

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ***MUCOUS MEMBRANE?***

CUT!

GREAT. PRINT IT. LET'S GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE.

COME OFF IT, TRAVIS. WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN *INSIDE* YET. I WANNA GET A FEW SHOTS IN THE CELLAR, WHERE THE *BODIES* WERE FOUND.

OH NO, I AIN'T GOING IN THERE! THAT WHOLE PLACE IS LIABLE TO FALL DOWN ANY SECOND!

*FINE, YOU DON'T GO IN THERE, THEN YOU DON'T GET FUCKING **PAID**, HOW 'BOUT THAT?*

MAN, THIS FUCKING TRAVIS GUY'S GODDAMN *PATHETIC*, HUH?

AND LOOK AT HIM, IT'S SO OBVIOUS HE'S GOT THE HUGEST HARD-ON FOR DANA.

*COREY, TELL ME YOU'RE **NOT** STILL FUCKING FILMING!*

PERO

BUT SHIT, *I* GOT A BETTER CHANCE A' FUCKIN' DANA THAN THAT JACKASS...

AND I GOT *HERPES.*

YOU HEAR ME, IVAN, I SAID--

YEAH, YEAH, I HEARD YA.

WHASSAMATTER, DUDE, YOUR *HAND* STILL HURTING? YOU WANT A FEW MORE LORTAB?

NO, THEY DON'T HELP AT ALL. IT'S LIKE IT *ITCHES, DOWN DEEP,* LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING...

OH GOD, IVAN, THAT DON'T LOOK TOO GOOD.

CIGARSMOKE BARS AND EXPENSIVE NEW CARS...

IVAN, WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING? DON'T *SCRATCH* IT LIKE THAT!

I CAN'T HELP IT, IT'S LIKE THERE'S *SOMETHING* DOWN IN THERE, AND IF I COULD JUST GET IT OUT...

THE ACAPULCO DIVE AND THE MEDIA JIVE, THEY ALL SURVIVE FOR THE VENUS OF THE HARDSELL.

LOOK, DUDE, JUST DON'T DO THAT, OKAY? I'M GONNA GO GET DANA.

JESUS CHRIST.

EMPTY GRAVES AND SHALLOW HEADS. SHALLOW SMILES AND EMPTY BEDS.

BETTA GET A ROOM WITHOUT A VIEW, SAIL OUT OF SIGHT OF LAND.

LISTEN FOR ALL THAT'S SAID, JUST WORRY WHEN THE HOUNDS AREN'T FED.

GOTTA WORRY WHEN THE HOUNDS AREN'T FED.

"BLANK GENERATION" BY RICHARD HELL.

THE DAMNED, "NEAT NEAT NEAT."

X-RAY SPEX, "OH BONDAGE, UP YOURS."

X-RAY SPEX, "THE DAY THE WORLD TURNED DAYGLO."

AH, NICE ONE. "WE VIBRATE" BY THE VIBRATORS.

"TOO DRUNK TO FUCK," THE DEAD KENNEDYS.

ARE THESE *REAL* SONGS OR ARE YOU GUYS JUST MAKING SHIT UP?

WHY, TRAVIS, YOU GOT A BETTER PICK FOR THE *PERFECT* PUNK SONG?

FUCKIN' A, THAT'S *EASY*... "BASKET CASE" BY GREEN DAY.

OH, FOR FUCKSAKE...

HEY, HOLD UP NOW. LOOK AT THESE BEAUTIES RIGHT HERE.

WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH THOSE?

I'M GONNA *EAT* 'EM AND TRIP MY *BALLS OFF.*

YOU CAN'T DO THAT, THEY COULD BE *POISON!*

NO, TRUST ME, IF THERE'S ONE THING I KNOW OTHER THAN BRITISH PUNK AND ASIAN PORN, IT'S PSYCHEDELIC MUSHROOMS. THESE ARE GOOD STUFF.

YOU'RE *CRAZY* IF YOU EAT THAT.

I'LL DO IT.

DANA!

RELAX, TRAVIS. WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE. NOT UNTIL WE GET THOSE LAST SHOTS OF THE CLUB TOMORROW.

YOU'RE STILL NOT GETTING ME IN THAT DAMNED CELLAR.

C'MON, TRAVIS, HAVE A BITE. IT'D DO YA GOOD TO LOOSEN UP A LITTLE.

IT LOOKS LIKE ASS.

TASTES LIKE ASS TOO, BUT DON'T WORRY, IT'S WORTH IT.

A *TOAST* THEN...

TO THE MUSICAL STYLINGS THAT HAVE BROUGHT US ALL THE WAY TO JOLLY OLD ENGLAND AND THE SCENIC CONFINES OF THIS NEWCASTLE JUNKYARD...

"HERE'S TO *MUCOUS MEMBRANE.*"

THEY WERE AN *AMAZING* BAND. SIMPLY AMAZING.

COMBINING THE INEPT ENERGY OF *THE ADVERTS* WITH THE VITRIOLIC BLAST OF *THE DEAD KENNEDYS.* AND A BITING SATIRE THAT WOULD'VE MADE EVEN JOE STRUMMER PROUD.

IT'S A SHAME THEY NEVER RECORDED AN ALBUM.

I SAW THEM PLAY AT DINGWALLS IN '78.

THE BAND WEREN'T NOTHING SPECIAL, BUT THAT *CONSTANTINE*... I TELL YA HE HAD THE WHOLE PLACE UNDER SOME KINDA *SPELL.*

EVERY GIRL IN CAMDEN WANTED TO TAKE HIM HOME THAT NIGHT.

YOU WANT THE STORY OF MUCOUS MEMBRANE?

THEY WERE *BLOODY AWFUL* ON THE FIRST NIGHT THEY PLAYED, AND THEY WERE *FAR FRIGGIN' WORSE* BY THE LAST.

THAT'S IT.

DAMN, IT ITCHES LIKE *CRAZY.*

THERE'S SOMETHING UNDER THERE, I GOTTA...

THINK I GOT IT... YEAH, I THINK I...

WHAT THE FUCK...

Pull Me

AH HA HA HAAAA!

I AM *SO* FUCKING STONED RIGHT NOW, I DON'T THINK I CAN *MOVE.*

TOLD YA, DIDN'T I?

GOD, LOOK AT THOSE STARS...

HEY, THERE'S ANOTHER DEAD DOG OVER HERE! I'M GONNA KEEP FILMING...

YOU SEE THESE STARS, DANA?

WHAT?

DID YOU *REALLY* MEAN THAT, TRAVIS?

WHAT YOU JUST SAID...

ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO *MOVE.*

ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO MOVE
BEING ABLE TO MOVE
BEING ABLE TO MOVE
MOVE
MOVE
MOVE
YES...

OH GOD, YES...

OH YEAH, YOU FEEL SO GOOD...

SO GOOD. YEAH, JUST LIKE THAT...

YOU'RE THE BEST, BABE. YOU'RE THE *GREATEST.*

GOD, DANA, I THINK I *LOVE* YOU.

DO YOU...

DO YOU HEAR THAT, TRAVIS?

I GOTTA GO SEE...

HEY, RANDY.

N, NN, N, NNOOR...

AARRGH!
ARRGHHH!

HELLO?
I HEARD YOU
CALLING...

IT'S
OKAY...

YOU CAN
COME OUT
NOW.

YES. YES, I HEAR YOU, AND I UNDERSTAND...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM TOO...

BLACK FLAG

"WE *ALL* HAVE."

GOTTA FILM IT. GOTTA FILM IT ALL.

NOBODY CAN TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ME, BABY.

I'M GONNA STAY WITH YOU *FOREVER.*

AAHEEIAIA! AAAH!

SCHKRICT

YEAARGH!

NORFULTHING... THAT'S YOUR NAME, ISN'T IT?

AND YOU KNOW *HIM.* YOU KNOW *CONSTANTINE.*

NO, WAIT, I CAN HELP...

HKKK

HAKK HUHH HUHH

PLEASE...

AAAAH

HKK KK KKKSSS

CONSTANTINE!

JOHN CONSTANTINE? HAVEN'T SEEN THAT SCOUNDREL IN YEARS, AND DON'T CARE TO. INFESTED ME WHOLE BUILDING WITH BUGS, HE DID.

IF HE WAS IN A ROCK BAND OF SOME SORT, I CAN ASSURE YOU IT WAS A RIGHT *HORROR SHOW.*

Simon Ne[illegible]
Paranormal Fun[illegible]

UH...WELL, I'M AFRAID THOSE YEARS ARE ALL A BIT OF A *BLUR* FOR ME, NOW, ACTUALLY.

I HAD A SERIOUS DRUG PROBLEM BACK THEN, YOU KNOW.

THAT WAS OF COURSE BEFORE I WAS INTRODUCED TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS.

CAN I INTEREST YOU YOUNGSTERS IN SOME LITERATURE?

Benjamin "Beano" Digby
[illegible]

LET ME TELL YA ABOUT JOHN CONSTANTINE.

THERE WERE *SIX PEOPLE* MURDERED IN THE CELLAR OF THAT CLUB BACK IN '78, ALL OF 'EM *HACKED* UP INTO BITS.

AND THEN THERE WAS THE LITTLE GIRL, *ASTRA,* HAD HER BLEEDIN' *ARM* PULLED OFF, AND WE NEVER EVEN FOUND THE *REST* OF HER.

Randall Dubhlaing
Former Newcastle Police Detective

YOUR BOY CONSTANTINE GOT OFF THE HOOK BY PLEADIN' LOONY, BUT I TELL YA, FAR AS I'M CONCERNED...

...THAT ROTTEN BASTARD KILLED 'EM ALL.

ONE TICKET ON THE NEXT TRAIN TO ***NEWCASTLE,*** PLEASE, LUV.

NEWCASTLE, EH? HAD ME HEN PARTY THERE IN THE BIGG MARKET. RIGHT FINE ***KNEES UP*** THAT WAS. SEEMS LIKE A THOUSAND YEARS AGO NOW, THOUGH.

IF YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR A GOOD ***PUB,*** YA COULD DO WORSE THAN THE BLACKIE BOY OR THE PIG AND WHISTLE.

'PRECIATE THE TIP, BUT I DOUBT WE'LL MAKE IT DOWN THE PUB THIS TIME AROUND.

BUSINESS TRIP?

ALWAYS BUSINESS, I'M AFRAID, 'LEAST WHEN IT COMES TO NEWCASTLE.

SHAME.

WILL YOU BE CARRYING ANY ***BAGGAGE*** WITH YOU THEN?

OH ***AYE,*** LUV...

NewCASTLE CaLLinG

PART one of TWO

JASON AARON
writer

SEAN MURPHY
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LEE LOUGHRIDGE
colors

JARED K. FLETCHER
letters

LEE BERMEJO
cover artist

CASEY SEIJAS
editor

LOADS OF IT.

AT A PUB ON STOWELL STREET, ONE GENT'S INTENSELY PAINFUL INDIGESTION HAS JUST GIVEN WAY TO A DIARRHEIC EXPLOSION OF FULL-GROWN SCORPIONS.

A PACK OF YOUNG HOOLIGANS ARE TROLLING HILLHEAD ROAD WITH A ROLL OF DUCT TAPE, A PILLOWCASE AND A BIG HUNGRY RAT.

IN CHINATOWN, A CLAIRVOYANT WAKES TO FIND THAT SHE'S SLIT HER OWN WRISTS WHILE ASLEEP.

DOWN IN CHAPEL PARK, A BLOKE PASSES OUT WHILE HIS BIRD'S GOING DOWN ON HIM. A MOMENT LATER HE WAKES TO FIND THAT AN EIGHTEEN-INCH PERUVIAN CENTIPEDE HAS WRIGGLED FROM THE END OF HIS JOHN THOMAS AND EATEN THE GIRL'S FACE FROM THE INSIDE.

OVER IN OUSEBURN VALLEY, A TYPIST FROM THE OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS DECIDES SHE'S GOING TO LEAVE TOWN AND START A NEW LIFE.

BUT FIRST SHE HAS TO DISPENSE WITH THE OLD ONE.

AT ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL, A STATUE OF THE VIRGIN MARY HAS BEGUN TO PISS ITSELF.

A MOTHER IN BYKER WALL IS TOSSING CHUNKS OF HER FIRSTBORN OFF THE BALCONY LIKE CONFETTI, WHILE THE REST OF HER NIPPERS WATCH FROM THE CORNER, WAITING THEIR TURN.

AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD IN WOOLSINGTON VILLAGE DECIDES TO SEE WHAT MUMMY AND DADDY LOOK LIKE ON THE INSIDE.

ALL OVER THE CITY, YOU CAN FEEL IT SPREADING.

THE *TERROR.* THE ELEMENTAL *MADNESS.*

CHAOS OF THE ANCIENT AND INFERNAL SORT HAS COME ONCE AGAIN TO NORTHEAST ENGLAND.

AND THUS...

...SO THE FUCK HAVE I.

WELCOME TO NEWCASTLE

NewCAStLE CaLLinG

PART two of TWO

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NEWCASTLE.

ALWAYS BLOODY *NEWCASTLE.*

JUST WHEN I THINK I'M DONE WITH THE BLASTED PLACE FOREVER...

SHOULDA KNOWN THIS BURG WOULD BE NOTHING BUT TROUBLE...

THE FIRST TIME I EVER LAID EYES ON IT.

FUCK YOU, NEWCASTLE!

FUCK IT ALL AND FUCK YOUR *WHOLE FUCKING TOWN!*

HERE'S ANOTHER SONG YOU TWATS ARE TOO *BLOODY DAFT* TO APPRECIATE!

JUST FUCKIN' PLAY SOMETHING, GAZ!

DOWN IN LOUISIANA, DOWN IN NEW ORLEANS, BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH, JOHNNY B. GOODE.

MUCOUS MEMBRANE

CUT IT, GAZ. THIS IS BLOODY AWFUL!

OI! FUCK YOU, NEWCASTLE!

TO HELL WITH THE WHOLE BLEEDIN' LOT OF YE!

"I HOPE YOU ALL DIE IN THE STREET LIKE DOGS!"

NOOOOO! GET AWAY! YOU CAN'T HAVE HER! YOU CAN'T TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME!

IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, I KNOW WHAT THIS IS. I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THESE POOR BASTARDS.

I LOVE HER AND SHE LOVES ME AND NOBODY CAN TAKE HER AWAY!

SHE'S MINE TO LOVE FOREVER AND EVER.

BUT I KEEP HOPING THAT FOR ONCE THIS'LL HAVE FUCK-ALL TO DO WITH ME.

JUST THIS ONCE, HOW GRAND WOULD IT BE IF THIS WHOLE DAMN MESS DIDN'T SOMEHOW TURN OUT TO BE ENTIRELY *MY* BLEEDIN' FAULT.

FAT FUCKIN' CHANCE OF THAT THOUGH, AYE?

I KEEP PULLING IT...

I KEEP PULLING IT AND IT KEEPS COMING OUT...

IT HURTS BUT I KEEP PULLING IT...

I DON'T KNOW...

MAYBE I SHOULD STOP.

YA ASK ME, MATE... THERE'S NO POINT IN STOPPING NOW.

MIGHT AS WELL SEE IT THROUGH.

YEAH...

YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.

HAVE TO FINISH WHAT I STARTED...

AAAHHH!

POP!

AAAAAARRRGHH!

SPLURCH

AHH... HUUUHH...

AAH, IS IT THE END?

DID I MAKE IT TO THE END OF THE RIBBON YET?

'FRAID NOT, MATE. BUT CARRY ON.

YOU GOTTA BE GETTING CLOSE.

POOR FUCKED BASTARD. WHEN HE DOES FINALLY MAKE IT TO THE END OF THAT RIBBON...

Toss

...I DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND TO SEE WHAT SORT OF SHIT PULLS FREE.

AAAAAAARRRGHH!

I SHOULD BE *RUNNING*, I KNOW. I SHOULD BE RUNNING TO STOP THIS.

BUT IT TAKES EVERY BIT OF WILLPOWER I HAVE JUST TO KEEP WALKING.

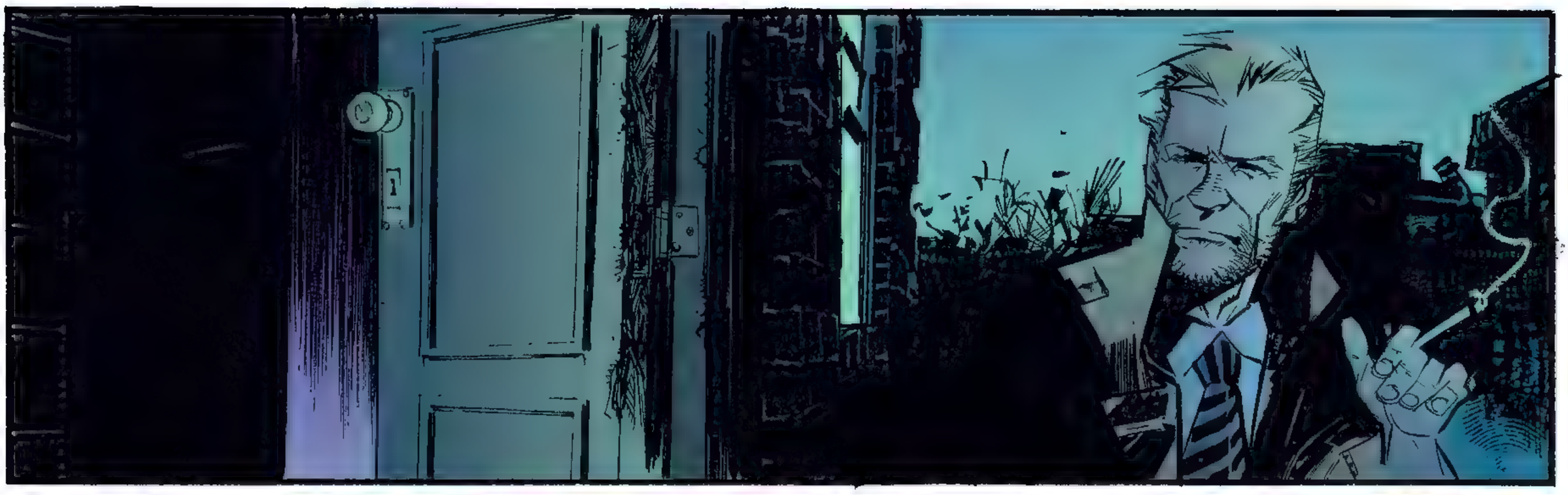
PART OF ME WANTS TO GO ALL MENTAL, LIKE THE REST OF THE TOWN.

PART OF ME WANTS TO DO ANYTHING... *ANYTHING AT ALL...*

TO KEEP FROM COMING HERE.

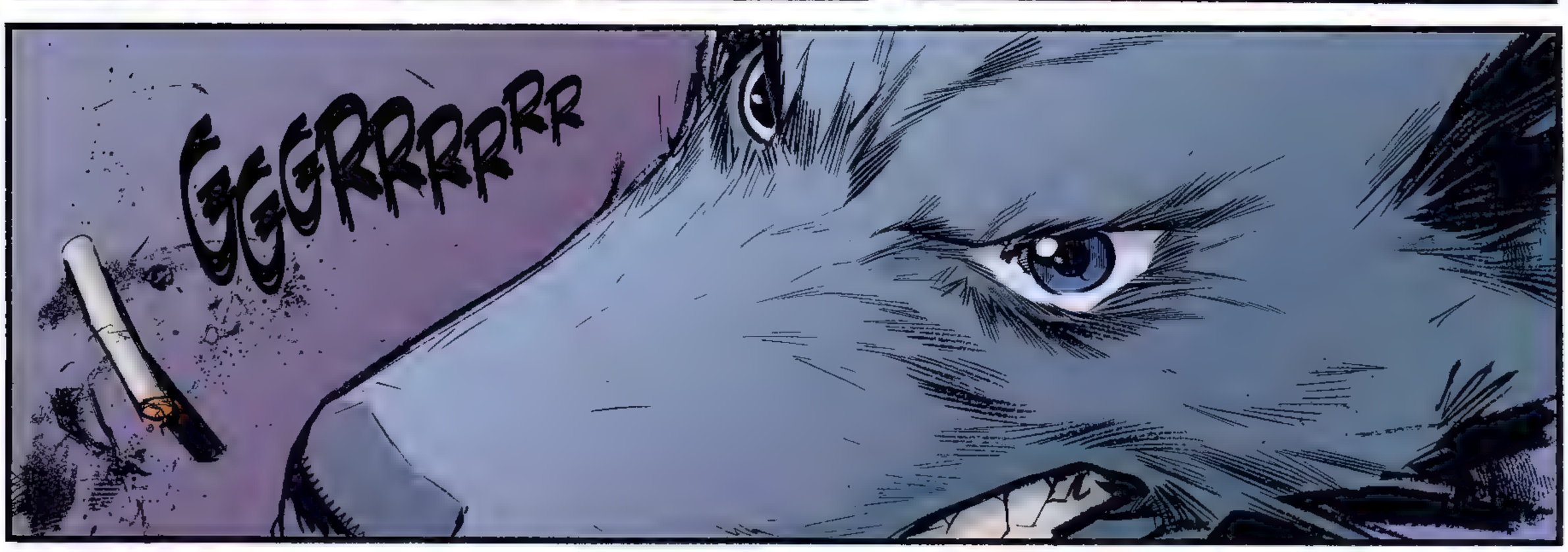
HERE WHERE I DESTROYED THE LIVES OF MANY.

AND THE SOULS OF MANY MORE.



EXIT
HEY THERE, PUP.
SKROMMP GROLF ROFF

REMEMBER YOUR UNCLE JOHN?


GGGRRRRRRR

BUT YOU'RE FORGETTING ONE THING...

IMPRESSIVE *MEMBER* YOU'VE GOT THERE, OLD BOY.

MINE'S BIGGER.

SHALL WE MEASURE?

THAT CONSTANTINE, HE WAS LIKE MAGIC, HE WAS.

HE'D BE UP THERE ON STAGE, ALL COVERED IN GOB, A WHOLE ROOMFUL OF ROWDIES AND PUNKS A-SCREAMING ALL MANNER OF UNFLATTERING EPITAPHS ABOUT HIS MOTHER...

AND BEFORE THE NIGHT WAS THROUGH, HE'D SOMEHOW HAVE 'EM ALL EATING OUT OF HIS HAND LIKE PUPS.

TIP.

YEAH...I WENT LOOKING FOR CONSTANTINE.

AND WHAT HE SHOWED ME WHEN I FOUND HIM...WELL, LET'S JUST SAY I HAVEN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE.

JUST YOU WAIT, YOU'LL SEE.

HE'LL OPEN *YOUR* EYES JUST LIKE HE DID MINE.

I WAS IN THE CONVENT WITH SISTER ANNE-MARIE. AND YES, SHE'D ONCE BEEN FRIENDS WITH THE MR. CONSTANTINE THAT YOU SEEK.

FRIENDS, OR MAYBE MORE, I DON'T KNOW. SHE SPOKE OF HIM SPARINGLY.

ALL I KNOW FOR SURE IS THAT SHE WAS WORKING WITH THIS CONSTANTINE WHEN SHE WAS MURDERED.

WHATEVER REASONS YOU HAVE FOR SEEKING THIS MAN, I IMPLORE YOU TO ABANDON THEM.

IF YOU CONTINUE DOWN THIS PATH...I FEAR FOR YOU, I SINCERELY DO.

"I FEAR FOR YOU ALL."

HELLO? IS ANYBODY THERE?

OH GOD, OH THANK GOD.

PLEASE, YOU HAVE TO HELP ME...

PLEASE, IT HURTS SO BAD...

WHAT IN THE HELL WERE YOU KIDS DOING OUT HERE?

HEH. WE WERE... WE WERE MAKING A DOCUMENTARY...

ABOUT A BAND CALLED MUCOUS MEMBRANE.

YOU'RE SHITTING ME.

WHAT, YOU'VE HEARD OF THEM?

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE THE LAST OF 'EM, MATE.

YOU MEAN MY FRIENDS? WHAT...WHERE ARE THEY?

ALL DEAD. WELL, EXCEPT FOR THE ONE WHO'S OFF SHAGGING CANINES.

OH MY GOD, YOU'RE *HIM!* YOU'RE *JOHN CONSTANTINE!*

OH PLEASE, MR. CONSTANTINE, PLEASE HELP ME, GET ME OUT OF THIS.

PLEASE, IT HURTS SO BAD. WHY DID THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN?

IT'S CALLED A *TERROR ELEMENTAL.*

A LITTLE GIRL NAMED *ASTRA* SUMMONED IT YEARS AGO, BECAUSE OF ALL THE THINGS HER SHITFUCK DADDY AND HIS WRETCHED LITTLE FRIENDS WERE MAKING HER DO.

IT KILLED THEM ALL. POPPED THEIR HEADS OFF. RAPED THEM SILLY.

THE GIRL CALLED IT A *NORFULTHING.* UGLY AS FUCK. LOOKS LIKE A GIANT, DISEASED DOG.

ME, I CALLED IT A *BIG FUCKING PROBLEM.*

I DECIDED TO RAISE A DEMON, FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE. WASN'T ME BEST IDEA EVER, I'LL ADMIT.

THE DEMON DID RIP THE MUTT'S HEAD OFF, BUT IT'S A BLEEDIN' TERROR ELEMENTAL, INNIT? JUST RIPPING ITS HEAD OFF DOESN'T KILL IT.

TOOK ME A FEW MORE YEARS YET TO FIGURE THAT ONE OUT THOUGH. BY THEN, MY ONLY OPTION WAS TO MAKE A *DEAL* WITH IT.

A DEAL? WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN, A DEAL? LOOK WHAT THIS FUCKING THING DID TO ME! WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST *KILL* IT?

LIKE I SAID, IT'S AN ELEMENTAL FORCE OF NATURE. IT WAS HERE BEFORE ME, BEFORE THE CLUB, BEFORE HADRIAN BUILT HIS FUCKING WALL.

ME TRYING TO KILL IT IS LIKE YOU STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF A RIVER, TRYING TO CHANGE THE CURRENT BY WAVING YOUR ARMS.

BEST I COULD DO WAS MAKE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR THE BUGGER. DIFFICULT ENOUGH THAT IT WAS WILLING TO DEAL.

IT'D STAY OUT OF TROUBLE, AND I'D ALLOW IT TO FEED ON SOMEONE ONCE A YEAR. THE WORST OF THE WORST. SOME WRETCHED BASTARD WHO DESERVED WHATEVER HE GOT.

SNAP!

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS WEREN'T PART OF THE DEAL THOUGH. MUST'VE RILED IT UP SOMEHOW.

BUGGER'S BACK IN ITS CAGE NOW THOUGH, FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH. I SENT IT DOWN IN A HOLE SO DEEP, IT'LL BE A GOOD LONG WHILE BEFORE IT DIGS ITS WAY OUT AGAIN.

ALL THIS MAGIC...THIS IS REALLY FOR REAL, HUH? YOU'RE LIKE A... LIKE A ***WIZARD*** OR SOMETHING.

CAN'T YOU HELP ME, GET ME OUT OF THIS?

AFRAID THAT'S BEYOND ME, MATE.

CAN'T YOU AT LEAST GIVE ME SOMETHING TO TAKE THE PAIN AWAY? IT HURTS SO BAD.

Toss

YOU KNOW, I DO HAPPEN TO HAVE SOMETHING IN ME POCKET HERE.

IT'S THE FINGER BONE OF ST. CAVARTIGAN. KNOWN TO BRING RELIEF TO THOSE IN NEED.

WHAT DO I DO?

JUST SQUEEZE IT REAL TIGHT. AND FOCUS ON MAKING THE PAIN GO AWAY.

THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO KNOW, CONSTANTINE... SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO TELL ME BEFORE I DIE...

ABOUT THE BAND... ABOUT MUCOUS MEMBRANE...

WE WERE *SHITE,* KID. WE WERE BLOODY AWFUL.

BUT THEN AGAIN, NO WORSE THAN A LOT OF OTHERS BACK THEN.

HEH, I *KNEW* IT.

DON'T TALK. JUST FOCUS ON THE CHARM.

YEAH. YEAH, I CAN FEEL IT WORKING.

I CAN FEEL IT... I CAN FEEL...

LOVE ADVENTURE DEATH AND GLORY. THE SHORT GOODBYE, THE WHISPERED STORY.

ONE LAST GLANCE AT THE CHAMELEON DANCE, AND INTO THE DARK ACROSS THE PARK...

BEWARE BIG FUCKIN' DOG

IT NEVER PAYS TO LOVE THE VENUS OF THE HARDSELL...

...DON'T FUCK AROUND WITH THE VENUS OF THE HARDSELL.

END
(NO FUTURE)

SO I SPEND *CHRISTMAS* CHASING THE *UNFUCKINGDEAD* AROUND IN THE SNOW, AND NOW, INSTEAD OF SPENDING *NEW YEAR'S FUCKING EVE* AT HOME, WARM, DRY AND DRUNK, I'M OUT IN THE PISSING *RAIN* WADING THROUGH *SLUSH* IN THE SAME PAIR OF LEAKY FUCKING *SHOES* ON ANOTHER FUCKING *MISSION.*

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION NUMBER *ONE*, JOHN CONSTANTINE --

DON'T FUCKING GET *INVOLVED.*

RESOLUTION NUMBER *TWO* --

DON'T OWE *FAVORS* TO *PONCES.*

ESPECIALLY NOT *POWERFUL, WELL-CONNECTED* PONCES.

LIKE EDWARD DEVERE FUCKING *MARQUISS*, SECURITY DIRECTOR OF THE ENGLISH MUSEUM.

LOOK *HERE*, CONSTANTINE, I'M NOT ASKING *MUCH*. GIVEN WHAT I COULD TELL THE AUTHORITIES ABOUT *YOU*.

AFTER *ALL*, NONE OF US LIKES *SCANDAL*, DO WE NOW?

MY PROBLEM IS *SIMPLE*. THE *SCYTHE OF OSIRIS* HAS GONE MISSING. AS YOU MAY *KNOW* --

SOLID GOLD. THREE THOUSAND YEARS OLD. IRREPLACEABLE. AND YOU'VE *LOST* IT. TUT-TUT.

IT HAS BEEN *STOLEN*. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THE >ahem< EGYPTOLOGIST *ALISTAIR CARSWELL* IS RESPONSIBLE. WE HAVE SECURITY TAPE OF HIM BEHAVING *SUSPICIOUSLY* IN THIS GALLERY LATE THIS AFTERNOON. YOU *KNOW* HIM, I FANCY?

OH YES. I *KNOW* HIM. WORSE *LUCK*.

CARSWELL'S AS CRAZY AS THEY *COME*. TALKING TO THE *DEAD*, TRYING TO FIND THE *ELIXIR OF LIFE*. NOW THE OLD TWAT'S TAKEN TO *CRIME*.

AND YOU WANT ME TO GET THE SCYTHE *BACK*. BEFORE ANYONE *ELSE* KNOWS IT'S GONE. BEFORE *YOU* LOOK *STUPID*.

YES, AND BEFORE I HAVE TO PASS CERTAIN *INFORMATION* REGARDING YOUR EXPLOITS TO THE METROPOLITAN *POLICE*.

'EY! YOU CAN'T SMOKE IN *'ERE*. 'EALTH AND SAFETY!

YEAH? WELL, *HEALTH'S* NOT A WORRY TO *THIS* LOT...

AND A CARELESS FUCKER LIKE *YOU'S* GOT SOME NECK GIVING ME A LECTURE ON *SAFETY*.

SO HERE I AM, ON THE TRAIL OF A LOONY *KLEPTO* ON WHAT'S S'POSED TO BE THE PARTY NIGHT OF THE *YEAR*.

BUT I'VE GOT FRIENDS, TOO. IF YOU COULD CALL THEM THAT.

ONE OF 'EM WATCHES *STREET CAMERAS* FOR A LIVING. WHEN THE FAT BASTARD'S NOT WATCHING RUSSIAN FARMYARD *PORN* FOR FUN, THAT IS. ONLY HE AND ME KNOW *THAT*, THOUGH. SO FAR.

TIPPED ME OFF CARSWELL WAS 'ROUND HERE. BIG HELP IN *THIS* FUCKING CROWD.

'SCUSE ME, HANDSOME...

YOU GOT A *LIGHT*?

HAH. OLDEST LINE IN THE BOOK. STILL, WHAT THE *FUCK*?

ALWAYS *DID* LIKE A NAUGHTY NUR --

NO!

CARSWELL. THAT DIDN'T TAKE *LONG*. I'M WONDERING WHAT HE WANTS WITH A *BABY*.

MY *BABY! MY BABY!*

THEN I *REMEMBER*. *SHIT*. THIS HAS ALREADY GONE FROM *THEFT* TO *KIDNAPPING*...

MAD OLD FUCKER'S NEXT CRIME'S *MURDER*.

AND I CAN *SEE* WHERE HE'S GOING TO *DO* IT.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE. SACRIFICE A CHILD IN FRONT OF THOSE HIEROGLYPHS AT MIDNIGHT AND YOU GET TO LIVE FOREVER. IF YOU USE THE RIGHT SACRED WEAPON.

IF YOU BELIEVE ALL THAT BOLLOCKS.

AND CARSWELL DOES.

BUT THE FUCKING CROWD'S TOO THICK TO GET TO HIM BEFORE HE GETS THERE.

FUCK THIS.

PLAN "B".

LOOK! NUTTER'S GOING TO --

CROWD'S THICK, ALL RIGHT. UGLY, TOO.

THAT'S IT, MATE. YOU GOT IT. I'M GOING TO FUCKING --

JUMP!

JAZZ BAND'S *SMASHING*, EH, FIONN?

SMASHING, HENRY. *ABSOLUTELY* SMA --

KERRRAAAASH

NOT THE SORT OF "*DO*" I'D USUALLY *CRASH*.

HOW *DARE* YOU? THIS IS A *PRIVATE* PARTY --

TERRORISTS! TERRORISTS! WE'RE ALL GOING TO *DIE!*

SECURITY! WHERE'S *SECURITY*, DAMMIT?

BUT AT LEAST CREEPS LIKE *THESE* HAVE GOT THE FUCKING *MANNERS* TO GET OUT OF MY *WAY*.

I SAY! THE FILTHY OIK'S STEALING OUR *BUBBLY* NOW!

GOING TO GOOD *USE*, WANKER.

OI! YOU AIN'T *ALLOWED* IN --

HNNF!

JUST *LEAVING*, BONEHEAD.

RESOLUTION... NUMBER...

THREE... JOHN.

STOP... >kof< ... FUCKING *SMOKING*.

SO WHERE *ARE* YOU, YOU MAD OLD *FUCKER*?

WHERE --

2009

YES. *GOT* YOU.

OUT THE *WAY*. OUT THE FUCKING *WAY*!

WE ARE *HERE*, CHILD. HERE AT THE NEXUS OF *DESTINY*.

WAAAAAA!

OH, GREAT *OSIRIS*. WITH YOUR HOLY *SCYTHE* I HARVEST THIS *NEW-BORN SOUL* AND GATHER IT UNTO *MYSELF*.

WAAAA! WAAA!

THUS, MAY I REAP THE *BLESSINGS* OF ETERNAL *LI* --

CHAAANNK

WHAT? CONSTANTINE? YOU SEEK ETERNITY, TOO?

NO, MATE. THREE SCORE AND TEN'S SHIT ENOUGH FOR ME.

JUST GIVE ME WHAT YOU STOLE AND WE CAN ALL GO HOME.

YOU MEDDLER! THE GODS SHALL DRINK YOUR BLOOD, TOO.

THAT... THAT BOTTLE YOU WIELD IS NO MATCH FOR THE SCYTHE OF OSIRIS.

Y'KNOW, YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT. SO LET'S TRY A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED --

KICK IN THE BALLS.

HOOOONNnfff!!

NNNAAAAAHH!

WAAA! WAAAH!

GO ON! KICK 'IM AGAIN! PAEDO BASTARD!

BROOKLYN! OH, BROOKLYN -- YOU'RE SAFE!

WAAAAAAHH!

BROOKLYN? WOULDN'T HAVE *HURRIED* SO MUCH IF I'D KNOWN THE POOR LITTLE SOD HAD TO CARRY *THAT* THROUGH LIFE...

ANYWAY, I'M JUST THINKING I'LL MELT AWAY INTO THE CROWD WHEN *PLOD* ARRIVES IN FORCE. HAVE TO MAKE A FUCKING *STATEMENT* NOW.

LITTLE BROOKLYN'S *SCREAMING*, HIS MUM'S *COOING* ABOUT HOW HAPPY SHE IS TO HAVE HIM BACK AND CARSWELL'S BABBLING CRAZY *BOLLOCKS*...

THEN, JUST AS *BIG BEN* STRIKES *MIDNIGHT*, THE NAUGHTY *NURSE* TURNS UP AND *INSISTS* SHE HAS TO TAKE ME FOR A *CHECKUP*.

IT'S ALL TOO MUCH FOR *PLOD*, SO THEY TELL ME TO REPORT TO BOW STREET IN THE *MORNING*.

MIGHT DO. IF I'M NOT TOO *SHAGGED OUT*.

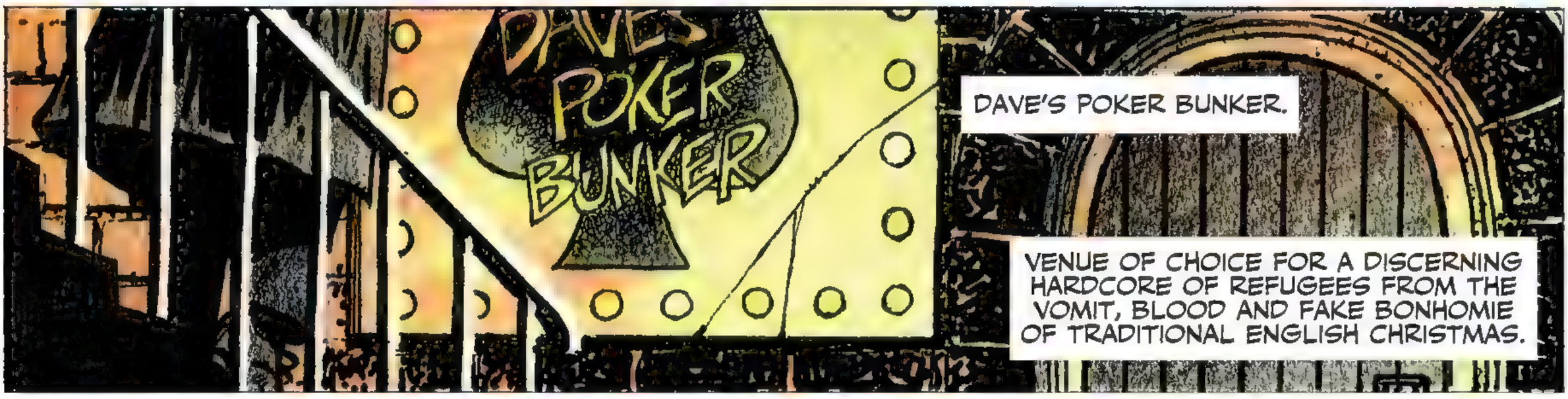
WHICH I FUCKING *INTEND* TO BE.

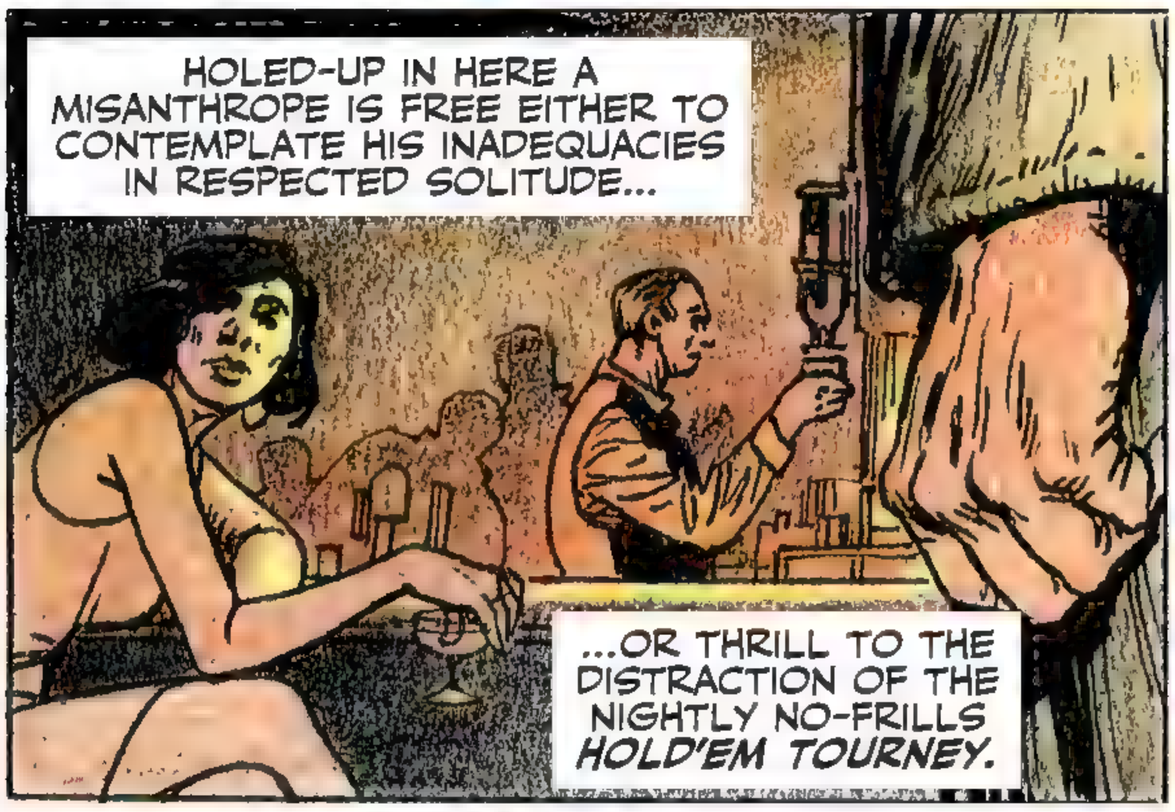
HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYBODY!

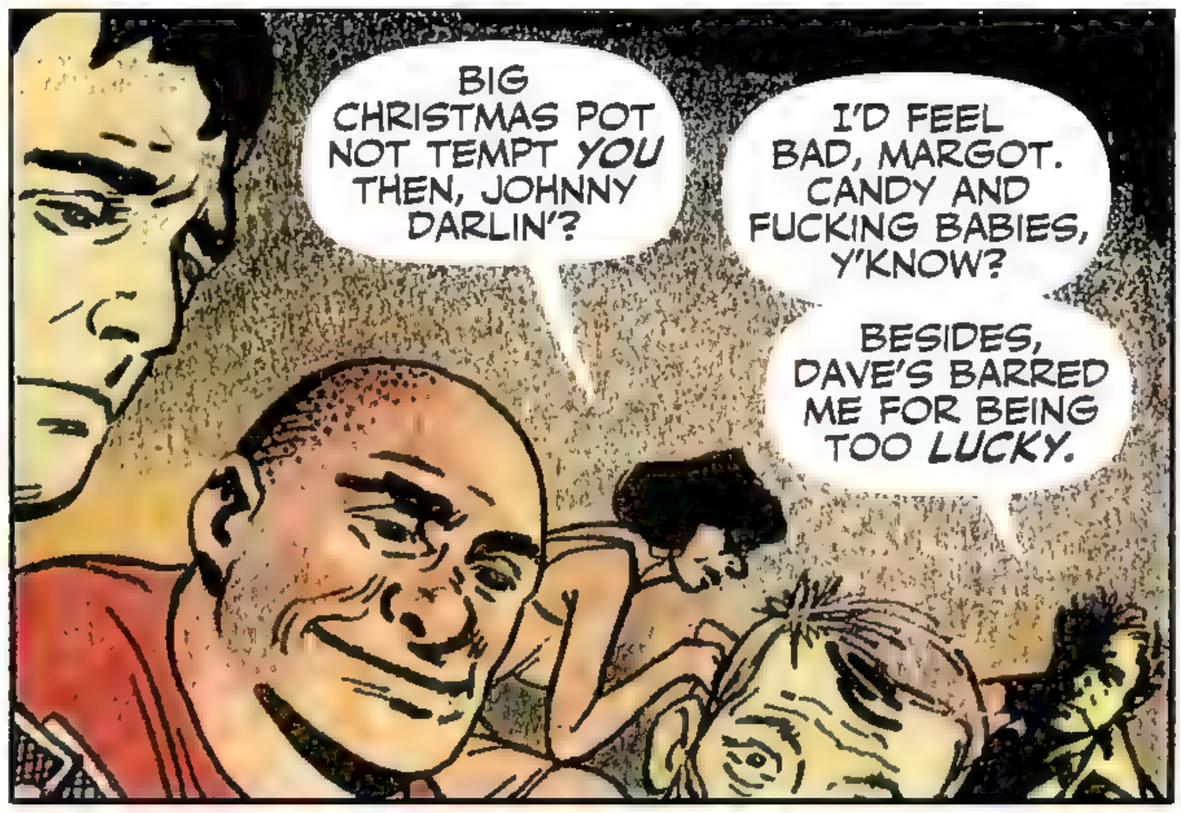
HAPPY NEW FUCKING YEAR!

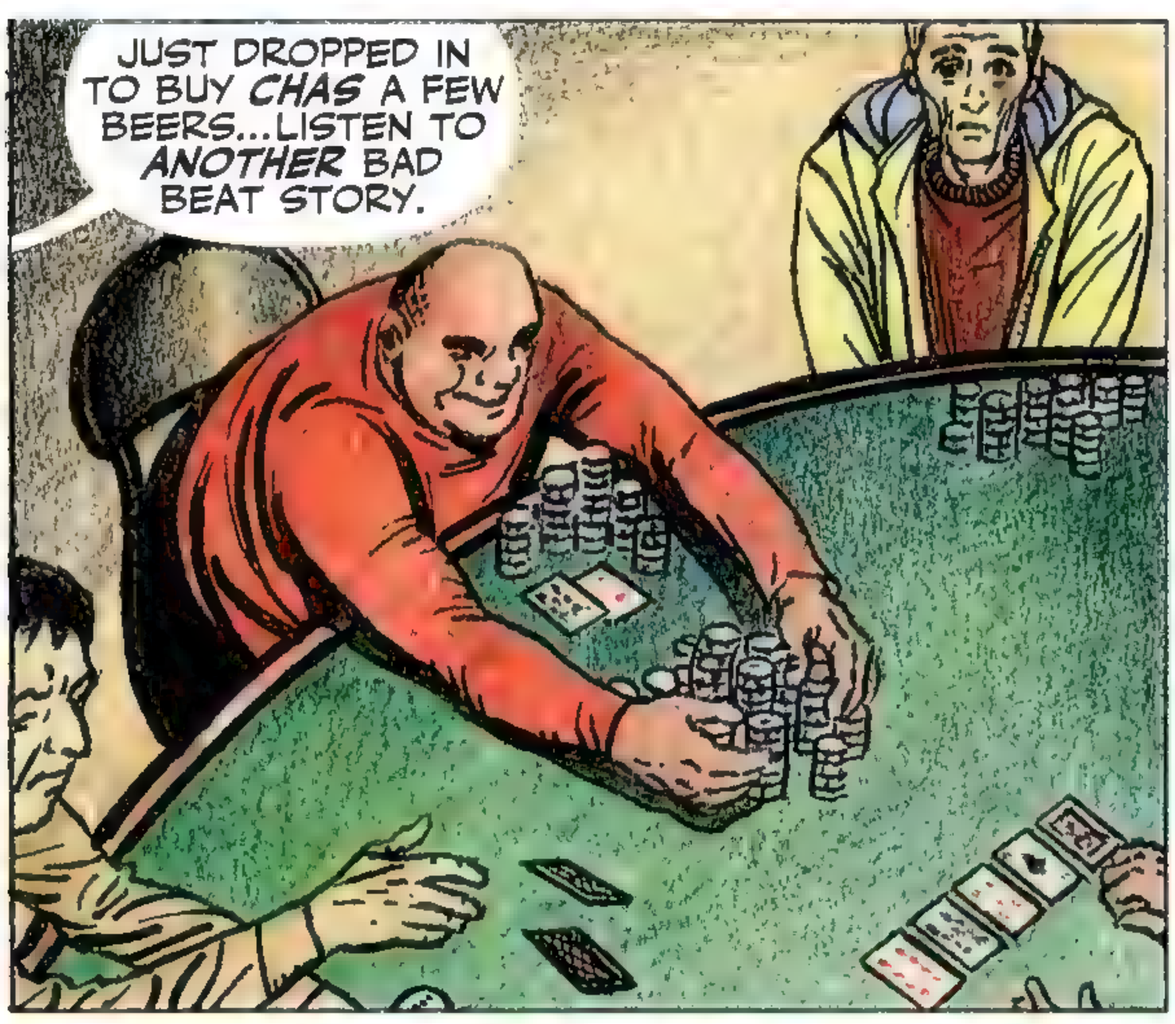
END.

CHRISTMAS CARDS









SCRIPT BY JAMIE DELANO – ART BY DAVID LLOYD

FUCK IT. THOUGHT I WAS IN WITH A CHANCE, THIS TIME. BASTARD BEAT ME LIKE A *DRUM.*

YOU WAS MUGGED, CHAS. PRICK PLAYS LIKE A THUG.

BUT *I'M* THE ONE THAT'S BARRED.

'CAUSE YOU'RE TOO FUCKING *SPOOKY.*

'LEAST THE PUNTERS KNOW *HOW* THEY LOST WHEN *BARRY THE BANDIT* HOLDS THEM UP.

SO WHAT'S THE STORY ON OLD *"GRIM DEATH,"* THERE?

DUNNO. WALK-IN. NO-NAME FOREIGN FISH.

BARRY'S ALL OVER HIM LIKE A FAT RASH, BUT THE OLD BOY KEEPS SUCKING OUT ON HIM.

BANDIT'S GOT ALL NIGHT, THOUGH.

NOT REALLY.

HE'S OVERDUE AT TURKISH TONY'S KEBAB HOUSE TO COVER THE VIG ON HIS BAD *CHINESE WATER-POLO* BETS...AND AVOID A CHRISTMAS KICKING.

HOW--?

JOHN'S GOT A *GIFT* FOR READING. AIN'T YOU, MATE?

TOLD YOU HE'S A FUCKING *SPOOK.*

JESUS, WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT? GRIM DEATH JUST RE-RAISED WITH RAGS AND TOOK IT ON THE RIVER.

YOU'RE FUCKING *JOKING.*

SIX EIGHT OFF-SUIT? WHAT WAS THE FOOL ***THINKING?*** BARRY'S GOING TO KICK HIS ***ARSE,*** NOW.

HE WAS THINKING ABOUT A CHILD.

"A GIRL RUNNING HOME FROM HER FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL, FLUSHED WITH THE NOVELTY OF KNOWLEDGE."

RIGHT. I'LL GIVE YOU TWO-TO-ONE ON *BARRY.*

THREE- TO-ONE AND YOU'RE ON FOR FIFTY.

I'LL MAKE IT A TON.

IT'S A BAD BET.

BARRY IS A GEM OF HUMAN UGLINESS: A WIFE-BEATING, CHILD-ABANDONING, MORALLY BANKRUPT, GAMBLING-ADDICTED LOSER AT JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING.

EXCEPT POKER.

WITH DARWINIAN ETHICS AND A PREDATOR'S INSTINCT FOR WEAKNESS, THE ARSEHOLE IS A NATURAL-BORN WINNER AT HOLD'EM.

LUCKY FOR HIM, BECAUSE STEALING THE HARD-EARNED FROM BAFFLED NO-HOPERS, LIKE CHAS, IS ALL THAT MAINTAINS THE BANDIT'S SELF-RESPECT AND KEEPS THE WOLF FROM HIS DOOR, THESE DAYS.

WANT THIS PRETTY *BAD,* EH? BIG CHANCE TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE?

DREAM ON, FISH. *DUMB LUCK* DON'T LAST FOREVER.

THE FAT MAN'S LIPS FLAP, BUT THE SOUND HAS NO MEANING. THE OLD MAN CLOSES HIS EYES.

AND WATCHES HIS ACHINGLY HOPEFUL ALMOST-WOMAN-CHILD LEAVE HOME, PROUD TO SUPPORT HER FAMILY WITH HONEST WORK ABROAD.

OLD GRIM DEATH CLINGS ON, PLAYING ON A WING AND A PRAYER, HIS MOVES NO MORE THAN RANDOM ACTS OF *FAITH.*

CHRIST. THAT WAS MY LAST FIFTY, JOHN.

LET'S HOPE THE POKER GODS ARE FEELING *SENTIMENTAL.*

BUT NOW GRIM DEATH FEELS THE *FEAR.* A LOST CHILD'S DISTANT CRY FOR HELP. THE UNBEARABLE NEED TO BRING HER HOME.

LONDON

HE PLAYS: HE WINS.

HE PLAYS: HE LOSES.

HE PLAYS.

STRIP

A B

21

HAND AFTER HAND, FOOTSTEP AFTER NUMB FOOTSTEP, HUNTING THE SICK CITY FOR HIS STOLEN CHILD.

TO FIND HER AT THE EXHAUSTED EDGE OF OBLIVION, BLIND FAITH IN ENDURANCE AND LOVE CONFIRMED... THEN BRUTALLY DENIED.

THE LOVING TOUCH
MASSAGE · SUN-BEDS
PIERCING

STUPID FUCKING PEASANT!

THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO BUY BACK YOUR SLUT FROM ME.

GRIM DEATH PLAYS. HE WINS. HE LOSES.

THE LOVING TOUCH
• MASSAGE • SUN-BEDS
PIERCING

HE CROSSES THE STREET. HER VOICE PLEADS IN HIS HEAD: "FATHER, DON'T LEAVE ME HERE."

HE WANTS TO DROWN HER. HE WANTS TO DROWN HIMSELF.

STAR OF BETHLEHEM

DAVE'S POKER BUNKER

BUT GRABS ONE LAST CHANCE ON FATE, INSTEAD.

GRIM DEATH WINS. GRIM DEATH LOSES.

JESUS. THIS COULD GO ON TILL *NEW YEAR'S.*

YEAH. EXCEPT BARRY'S SLOW-PLAYING POCKET QUEENS. AND HE'S FLOPPED THE FUCKING *NUTS.*

MIGHT AS WELL COUGH UP, CHAS. POOR SAP HAS *ACES* IN THE HOLE. OLD GRIM DEATH'S A FUCKING *GONER.*

SHIT. BANG GOES *RENEE'S* CHRISTMAS BOX.

THE TURN AND THE RIVER ARE BLANKS, OF COURSE.

GRIM DEATH DARES TO HOPE, TAKES HIS SWEET CHILD'S LAST CHANCE IN BOTH HANDS.

AND PUSHES IT INTO THE FAT MAN'S GRINNING TRAP.

I CALL.

FUCK. FULL HOUSE. BAD BEAT IF BARRY *DOES* HAVE QUEENS.

HE DOES.

THE BANDIT SLIPS A FAT FINGER UNDER THE SKIRTS OF HIS PRETTY LADIES... RELISHES THEIR REVELATION.

BUT DESIRE SHRIVELS, DISSOLVES IN A SUDDEN CHURNING VOID OF SELF-DISGUST.

COLD SHAME CREEPS HIS SKIN. HE SUCKS WIND, BREATHES CHEAP PERFUME MASKING THE SMELL OF DAMP...

...AND A GRUBBY MASSAGE-PARLOR PRE-GAME SHAG...LIMP, LIFELESS, DISAPPOINTING.

SHIT. HIS *DAUGHTER* IS PROBABLY OLDER NOW, THAN THIS SULLEN GIRL YEARNING TO SHOWER OFF HIS SWEAT.

FUCKING SCREW-FACED FOREIGN TART. HE *GAVE* HER AN EXTRA TWENTY. WHY SHOULD HE FEEL *GUILTY?*

TIME TO FLIP 'EM OVER, PUT THIS FUCK OUT OF HIS MISERY AND CLAIM A PAIN-FREE CHRISTMAS.

SO *WHY* HAS HE JUST TOSSED SWEET VICTORY INTO THE *MUCK?*

OKAY. YOU GOT ME.

AND PUT HIMSELF IN FUCKING *TRACTION?*

BUT WHILE *EPIPHANY* WOULD BE PUSHING IT, BARRY IS MARGINALLY HAPPIER LEAVING THE TABLE THAN HE WAS SITTING DOWN.

GOOD GAME, CHAP.

THOUGHT YOU SAID HE HAD THE *NUTS* THERE, JOHNNY.

HE DID.

SO WHY WOULD HE *FOLD?*

HARD TO SAY. PICKED UP A DOSE OF *GOODWILL,* MAYBE?

BOLLOCKS.

FACE IT. YOU READ IT WRONG, CONSTANTINE. YOUR MYSTIC POWERS ARE *WANING.*

OH? THAT MEAN I'M NOT *BARRED* ANYMORE?

NICE ONE, BARRY. DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD IT IN YOU, MATE.

NAH. ME NEITHER. MUST BE LOSING MY FUCKING *EDGE.*

GET YOU A DRINK?

NO. BEST NOT. I'M LATE.

GOT JUST ENOUGH LEFT FOR A NICE GREASY KEBAB.

POOR OLD BARRY. AMBUSHED BY SENTIMENTALITY.

AND CAB-FARE TO *TURKISH TONY'S.*

SEASONAL LESSON FOR ALL CYNICS, I GUESS. DON'T DROP YOUR GUARD FOR A MOMENT, OR THE *SPIRIT* OF FUCKING *CHRISTMAS* WILL RIP THE *BEST* FROM THE VERY *WORST* OF YOU.

END

John "Hellblazer" Constantine in:
"ALL I GOAT FOR CHRISTMAS"
A Poem by JIMMY PRZESKA, Local 432
(as told to Azzarello & Grampá)

WINTER CHILLS BRING HEATING BILLS, IN OUR FAIR WINDED CITY. THO' SHOULDERS BROAD, STILL HEADS HANG 'NEATH...

...A CENTURY OF SHITTY.

CHRISTMAS WISHES

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

SPORTS FINAL | DECEMBER 24, 2008

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THE PLAN WE HATCHED, 'MIT DRUNKENLY, O'ER A ROUND OF CHRISTMAS CHEER. AL KNEW A GUY, WHO KNEW A GUY...

CALLED THE INGLISHMIN TO HERE.

UPON THE MILE WE MET 'IM, SO MAGNIFICENT AN' BRIGHT...

...THEN DOWN THE STAIRS WE TOOK 'IM, AN' FAR, FAR FROM THE LIGHT.

bus stop

BILLY GOAT TAVERN EST. 1934

THE TASK THAT NEEDED DOIN', IT CAME AT QUITE A PRICE...

BONUSES WE'D ALL RECEIVED, THROUGH DAY JOBS, NIGHT AND VICE.

BILLY GOAT TAVERN

BUY ME OUT

BUT MONEY SPENT, THAT'S TIME THAT'S EARNED, FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE.

AND LIFE, IT KILLS, WHEN YOU DIE EACH YEAR...

...LIVING WITH A **CURSE.**

'TWAS FORTY-FIVE SIANIS,
BROUGHT A GOAT TO WRIGLEY FIELD,

AND DEMANDED ENTRY TO THE SERIES,

BUT THE GATEMAN WOULDN'T YIELD.

SO RED-FACED DID THE GREEK BECOME,
HIS WORDS NOW SPAT IN INFAME,

THAT FUCKIN' STINKIN' ANIMAL...

AND A THE JINX THAT BEARS ITS NAME.

"THE CUBS FOREVER--NEVER BE,
WORLD CHAMPION BASEBALL TEAM!

"THEY CANNOT WIN!

"THEY'LL ALWAYS LOSE!"

THE OLD MAN'S HEX DID DEEM.

AN' EVERY YEAR, THOSE WORDS RANG TRUE,
WAS NOTHING LESS THAN TRAGIC, WE ALL BELIEVED,

THEN PUT OUR FAITH...

...IN **INGLISH** AN' HIS MAGIC.

"I'LL BREAK YEA CURSE," HE SLYLY GRINNED,

"THO' AID I'LL NEED TO BEAT IT!"

WE SWALLOWED HARD, WHEN THEN INFORMED--

LIKE SINS WE'D HAVE TO **EAT IT.**

"SO BELLY UP, BOYS--GRAB A GLASS, AN' GIVE ONE TO THE LADIES.

"YOU'LL NEED YOUR SOULS, TO WASH WHAT'S NEXT--

"THE BITTER TASTE OF HADES."

THEN INGLISH OUT OF WHISKEY, HE FASHIONED HIM A KNIFE...

...AND CIRCLED ROUND, THEN ROUND AGAIN...

AS **THE CURSE** CRIED FOR ITS LIFE.

THEN SUDDENLY THE AIR GOT SAD, I SWEARS WHAT REMEMBER--

THE SMELL WAS BITTER,

FUTURELESS,

AS THE BED SHAT EACH SEPTEMBER.

WAS BATTERED DREAMS, AND FOULING HOPES, GAGGING UP THE NIGHT.

AN' THE CURSE, ITS BREATH DRIPPED "NO OCTOBER"...

...AS IT READIED FOR THE FIGHT.

ITS HOOFS HAD CRUSHED ONE HUNDRED SEASONS, GRINDING THEM TO DUST.

AND WITH EACH STOMP, AND STOPPING HEART--

ANOTHER ONE OF US.

PERHAPS THE STENCH WHAT BROUGHT IT ON,

THE TEARS IN EVERY EYE--

OR WATCHING INGLISH BLEED THE BLUE...

Billy Mac's Rustic Cuisine
HORNY GOAT
BACARDI LIMON
5 75

...THAT MIGHT NOT BE A LIE.

TURNING OFF THE RADIO,
CREEPING INTO BED;

IN SPRING WHAT IS ETERNAL,

BY FALL LIES GREY AND DEAD.

FOR SEASONS THEY DEFINE OUR LIFE,
OUR BATTERED DREAMS AND HOPE...

...THE PROMISE OF **ANOTHER** IS WHAT YOU GIVE TO COPE.

SO FORGIVE ME, JESUS, FOR WHAT I'VE DONE.

TO YOU I PRAY AND FEAR.

BUT I COULDN'T TAKE ANOTHER SEASON

OF WAITING 'TIL NEXT YEAR.

HORN

R. GRAMMPA '08

END

Darling, the turkey's ready!

You carry on, Sheena. Kind of promised ***number eleven*** I'd tackle this...

Fine, I'll tell our over-excited five-and seven-year-old children that daddy can't cut the turkey and wear a party hat and pull crackers...

Because he has to finish a study of the effects of fuel surcharges on macroeconomic indicators.

Would you?

No, George. I bloody would not. It's Christmas Day. Stop working or I'll divorce you.

The Prime Minister needs this by tomorrow--

The government can wait. ***I'll*** take a look at that later.

I--

Leave it, George.

The Curse of Christmas

It's a curse.

THE GRANBY

MERRY XMAS

Christmas Day. A fucking curse.

In my house it was always the same. Christmas morning we'd share a few hoary platitudes.

Then the bloodbath began.

The fights and arguments. 364 days of pent-up anger and spite spewed out over cheap mince pies.

I loved it.

Until I was old enough to understand what the arguments were about.

And a Jamesons, Richard.

Well? Any luck?

Not yet.

I could make things even more *uncomfortable* for you.

I've done what I can.

Now if you want to try to haunt me for the rest of my life, go ahead. You won't be the first to try.

I could have been made junior Finance minister in this winter's reshuffle.

I worked my ***nuts*** off, and just when it looked as though I was headed for the top, I...I...

David Brown, MP--died a year ago today. On Christmas Day.

Two other politicians died on the same day. In similar circumstances.

The News of the World suggested it was a "Kinky sex game" gone wrong.

All three of them.

One thing I don't get...

How come you all died at exactly the same time? In different parts of the country?

Exactly the same time?

Forget about the others. All I care about is what happened to **me.**

I can tell you that. You were hexed. ***Voodoo'd.*** Someone put a ***death curse*** on you. A real humdinger.

Who? How?

That I ***don't*** know.

Maybe you should try Googling "Simultaneous Christmas Death Syndrome."

Quiet, everyone. The ***Queen's speech!***

Christ. Just when you thought Christmas couldn't get any worse...

My husband and I--

The Queen... the ***same*** time... ***every*** year.

Don't Forget the Gevrey Chambertin.

David Brown told me about you.

David Brown? Y-You're crazy. He's been dead for a year.

He told me how ***ambitious*** you were.

How For the last two years you've written the passages the Prime Minister inserted into the Queen's Christmas speech.

Everyone listens to the Queen's speech.

You inserted a spell. A ***death curse*** that would get rid of your political rivals.

I d-don't know what you're talking about, now get off of--

--hhgnn!

Where did you get it? Who gave you the curse?

He doesn't know.

Now leave him alone.

The ghost of the man he killed last Christmas won't leave ***me*** alone.

He wants to know who killed him...

Ghost? He's a lunatic! Call the--

Shut up, George.

I was the one who inserted the ***death curse*** into the Queen's speech.

What death curse? Sheena?

I was not going to stand by and watch you get trampled over by those other men.

My grandmother did more than teach me a few old Celtic ***songs***, you know.

You stupid ***bitch!*** I didn't need your help!

How do you think you've got ***this*** far, George?

I'm not doing it for you. Our children need...

Oh, yes. The fights. The arguments.

364 days of pent-up anger and spite spewed out over cheap mince pies.

Christmas Day.

A fucking curse.

End

"IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER, FROSTY WIND MADE MOAN...

SNOW had FALLEN

"EARTH STOOD HARD AS IRON, WATER LIKE A STONE...

CAN'T TOP *ROSSETTI*, CAN YOU FATHER? FUCK *HOLST*, THOUGH. IT'S THE *DARKE* OR NOTHING.

I KNOW WHAT *YOU ARE*, CONSTANTINE. I HEARD YOU WERE COMING FOR ME. HOW MUCH ARE THEY PAYING YOU TO FINISH WHAT THEIR *DEVILS* STARTED?

WHOA, PADRE...

I'M JUST HERE SNOOPING FOR A MATE. IT'S NOT MY REGULAR THING BUT HE THINKS THERE'S SOMETHING *UNUSUAL* ABOUT YOUR LOCAL BHOPAL. AND I WAS TOLD YOU MIGHT HAVE SOME INFO...

WHY WOULD THE LIKES OF *YOUR* FRIENDS GIVE A DAMN FOR *US?*

HAVE YOU EVEN *HEARD* WHAT HAPPENED?

"SNOW HAD FALLEN, SNOW ON SNOW...

OH, I HEARD. EVERYBODY HEARD.

MULTINATIONAL WHATEVERTHEFUCK PLANT GOES BOOM. *DAYS* TILL THEY ADMIT THE SHIT IT SPREAD WAS ANYTHING TO *WORRY* ABOUT.

WE TRIED TO GET THE KIDS INSIDE, BUT...

WE JUST HAD SOME OLD *CHRISTMAS* BOOKS DONATED TO THE CHURCH. THEY COPIED THE PICTURES THEY'D SEEN, OF CHILDREN *PLAYING*. THEY THOUGHT THE ASH WAS *SNOW*. THEY THOUGHT IT WAS A MIRACLE.

"SNOW ON SNOW...

"IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER, LONG AGO."

AND NOW AFTER THAT... *POISON* MADE THEM SICK...

NOW *DEVILS* ARE COMING FOR THEM.

AH...SEE, WHEN DAVE SENT ME OUT HERE TO LOOK INTO AN *INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT*, I WAS THINKING *"WHAT?"*

WAIT...

...BUT IF IT'S *DEVILS*, NOW DEVILS I CAN DO.

EVER SINCE THE ASH FELL, SOME CHILDREN ARE BEING...*VISITED*. AND MY PRAYERS DO NOTHING TO KEEP THESE VISITORS AWAY.

HAVE YOU COME TO *HELP* US?

WITH THE *WINGS?*

AGAINST *THEM?*

AND NO *FACES?*

AND *ALL BURNT UP?*

WELL? HAVE YOU? THIS WAS ***NOT*** AN ACCIDENT.

FOR YEARS IT WAS ***POLICE.*** THEN ***PARAMILITARIES.*** THEN POISONED ASH. NOW THEY'RE SENDING ***DEVILS*** TO KILL US.

I CAN...SEE NO ONE'S HAVING A ***GOOD DAY,*** BUT IS THAT NOT A BIT OF A ***LEAP,*** FATHER?

WHY? WE'VE ALWAYS KNOWN THERE'S ***WITCHCRAFT*** IN THAT PLACE. YOUR ***FRIEND*** KNOWS IT TOO, OR WHY WOULD HE SEND ***YOU?*** IF YOU THINK THE CHILDREN ARE *IMAGINING* DEVILS...

...THEN SO AM ***I.***

I'VE ***SEEN*** THEM.

WITH WINGS, AND NO FACES, AND ***ALL BURNT UP.***

WISH I DIDN'T OWE DAVE A FAVOUR... ALL RIGHT, MONEY. I HATE THESE CORPORATE GIGS.

HE'S RIGHT, THIS PLACE HAS THE STINK OF HEX ABOUT IT, NO QUESTION. BUT NO INCRIMINATING SCROLLS, NO ***SMOKING WAND.*** I'M DRAWING A BLANK...

WHO ARE YOU AND HOW DID...? ACTUALLY DON'T ***BOTHER,*** I DON'T ***CARE.***

THE USUAL: BIT OF ***VIOLENCE,*** BIT OF ***BRIBERY,*** BIT OF ***MAGIC.*** I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU ABOUT THE ACCIDENT, BUT NOW I WANT TO TALK ABOUT ***DEVILS.***

SECURITY. ANOTHER ***GUTTER-MAGE*** GOT IN.

FRIEND OF MINE THINKS THIS IS AN ***INSURANCE*** JOB, BUT IT AIN'T, IS IT? YOU CALLED SOMETHING TO SCREW WITH THOSE POOR ***SODS*** BY YOUR FACTORY. I GET THAT. BUT HELP ME OUT... I'VE BEEN AT THE HELL GAME A WHILE...

AND WHATEVER YOU'VE INVOKED IS RINGING ***NO BELLS*** AT ALL.

YOU'VE BEEN TALKING TO THE PRIEST. AS I SAID TO HIM, MR. ***ABOUT-TO-BE-SAVAGELY-BEATEN,*** WHY WOULD I BLOW UP MY ***OWN*** FACTORY? DO YOU HAVE THE ***SLIGHTEST*** IDEA HOW MUCH THIS COCK-UP IS ***COSTING*** ME?

COME ON. CLEARING UP A TOXIC SPILL: GAJILLIONS OF BUCKS. ***COWED LOCAL POPULACE?*** PRICELESS.

YOU THINK I NEED THAT SORT OF HELP? I WOULDN'T WASTE A ***GOAT*** ON THE SACRIFICE, LET ALONE ***THIS...*** NOW EXCUSE ME, ***I'M*** GOING TO SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH MY FAMILY, AND ***YOU*** HAVE YOUR OWN APPOINTMENT.

HAVE AN EGGNOG FOR ME. BUT ONE QUESTION...

...HOW D'YOU KNOW ***I'M*** THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO GET ***SAVAGELY BEATEN?***

NO I'M NOT OK, DAVE, I JUST GOT SAVAGELY BEATEN.

...THE LESS YOU MOAN ABOUT ME REVERSING CHARGES, THE SOONER WE'LL BE **DONE** AND THE LESS THIS'LL COST. NOT THAT IT'S COSTING **YOU** ANYWAY, YOU TIGHT GIT, YOU'RE AT THE OFFICE, EVEN TODAY. NO REST FOR...

SALE

CALL BOX

I COULDN'T FIND **SHIT.** FRANKLY I THINK THE FUCKER WAS TELLING THE **TRUTH,** EVEN ABOUT THESE ATTACKS, I DON'T THINK THEY'RE DOWN TO HIM. THERE ARE LOCAL DEATH-SQUADS HE COULD HIRE FOR A **MILLIONTH** THE PRICE...

WELL HE WAS DEFINITELY TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT IT'S COST. IF THIS EXPLOSION ***ISN'T*** A SCAM, IT'S A ***DISASTER*** FOR THEM. WIPED PISSLOADS OFF THEIR VALUE. BUT YOU KNOW THE RUMOURS...

THAT'S WHY I ASKED ***YOU*** TO CHECK IT OUT. THEY'RE INTO BAD MAGIC.

YEAH, THEM AND THE WHOLE ***FORTUNE 500...***

NOT LIKE THIS. NO SPECIFICS, BUT FOR MONTHS THE SCUTTLEBUTT'S BEEN THAT WHATEVER THEY'RE RENDERING IN THAT PLANT IS PURE STONE **EVIL.**

IMAGINE THE APPLICATIONS! THE MARKET'S HAD A HARD-ON. AND NOW I REPRESENT SOME **VERY** ***DISAPPOINTED*** INVESTORS...

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT, BUT I CAN'T SEE HIS ANGLE. BUT IF IT ***WEREN'T*** HIM, WHO THE FUCK CALLED UP DEVILS SO RARE I'VE NEVER SEEN 'EM--?

--GOT TO GO.

HO HO HO.

GOD'S SAKE, MAN, THEY'RE *COMING!* HELP ME! THEY'RE COMING FOR THE *CHILDREN.*

TO, FATHER, *TO.* NOT *FOR.* IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE. HAVE A BIT OF *FAITH.*

FATHER, THEY'RE *HERE!*

THE WINGED DEVILS!

THAT *AIN'T WHAT THEY ARE!*

THE *ASH DEVILS!*

WITHOUT FACES...*WITH* WINGS...

JUST LIKE THE *PICTURES,* YOU SAID.

SURE THERE'S EVERYDAY CRAP IN THE ASH TO MAKE YOU SICK, BUT THAT PLANT WAS PURIFYING *EVIL.* YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS THEY WERE BURNING *OFF?* WHAT THE KIDS WERE PLAYING IN?

GOOD.

GOODNESS ITSELF. THAT'S WHAT THEY BURN OUT TO MAKE BAD.

AND THAT'S WHAT'S COME TO VISIT.

WHY... ARE THEY HERE? WHAT DO THEY WANT?

CUT THEM SOME SLACK. THIS WASN'T A COMPANY SCAM, THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT...THEY'RE ACCIDENTS. NEWBORN. SO THEY'RE CONFUSED. THEY'VE COME TO FIND THEIR MAKERS. FOR HELP.

YOU CAN SEE WHAT THEY ARE, PADRE, AND THEY CAN SEE WHAT YOU ARE. 'COURSE PRAYERS DON'T SCARE THEM! THEY'RE WAITING FOR INSTRUCTIONS.

THEY'VE COME FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD.

...SMITE EVIL.

THINK WHAT A BLOODY *LAUGH* YOUR FIRST CHRISTMAS SNOW MUST BE.

ALL THOSE VIBES. ALL THAT...JOY...POURED INTO *MUCKY, MAGIC GOODNESS. DECENCY* AS AN INDUSTRIAL *BYPRODUCT.*

THEY WERE *LYING* IN *ACCIDENTALLY HOLY ASH*...GIVING IT *THAT* SHAPE. IT'S NO SURPRISE, IS IT, WHAT HAPPENED?

THE KIDS MADE *ANGELS.*

GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE! IF ONLY *ALL* POLLUTION WENT BACK TO THE SOURCE, EH? AND NOW ALL YOUR TINY TIMS'RE ON THE *MEND?*

...THE CHILDREN? THEY'RE...FEELING BETTER. TAKING IT SLOW.

I WON'T SAY I'M *ASHAMED* OF WHAT I TOLD THE...

NOW, DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE *"A"-WORD.*

...THE *VISITORS* TO DO. I'M NOT. BUT NOW THAT MAN'S GONE, AND THAT'S THE *END* OF IT. WILL YOU JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS MASS?

THE *END?* YOU *RECKON?* A COMPANY LIKE THAT'S MORE THAN ONE WANKER IN A SUIT, YOU KNOW THAT.

BUT THEN...THIS LOT WERE *MARINADED* IN HOLY SLAG, AND THAT'S NOT JUST GOING TO WASH OFF. WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY MIGHT DO?

HAPPY CHRISTMAS, ANGEL-MAKERS! YOU LOT SHOULD GO ON *TOUR.* THINK OF ALL THE POWDERY POTENTIAL!

BAD THINGS HAPPEN IN SUGAR MILLS AND SALT MINES, COCAINE PLANTS AND SAND DUNES AND DUST AND YEAH, EVEN IN THE *SNOW.*

LIE DOWN AND WAVE YOUR ARMS AND LEGS AROUND WHEREVER *INJUSTICE STRIKES,* EH? CALL UP A BIT OF *HELP.* I'LL SEE YOU THERE.

FUCK WHAT YOU HEARD.

I'M ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS.

END

"NICE BEDTIME STORY, MATE. WISH I'D HEARD MORE OF 'EM. MIGHT'VE ENDED UP A BETTER MAN."

From the elemental-haunted swamps of Louisiana to the gray emptiness of Limbo, there's precious few places under Heaven where John Constantine hasn't paused to have a few drinks and drop some cigarette butts. Usually not too many people notice him, which is a lucky thing, since misfortune and mayhem inevitably follow in his footsteps. But wherever he goes, there's always someone — or some*thing* — that is drawn like a moth to his dark flame.

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